



THE PLEASURES OF POPE



ALEXANDER POPE

THE  
PLEASURES OF  
POPE

EDITED  
WITH A FOREWORD  
BY  
*PETER QUENNEL*

HAMISH HAMILTON

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ALEXANDER POPE

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*TO*  
DIANE ABDY



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## FOREWORD

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THE life of the English lover of poetry is usually divided into several different ages; and during each age he is inclined to look back with feelings of slight contempt on the emotions that he experienced while he was passing through a previous period. First, he is a whole-hearted admirer of the great Romantic poets: Keats illuminates the earth below and, high overhead, Shelley shrills for his delight from dim and dizzy distances. Next the Elizabethans may claim his loyalty; and, after the Elizabethans, generally comes the turn of the seventeenth-century writers. Each period corresponds to a distinct stage of his personal development. But he often covers, as he thinks, the whole of English poetry and arrives at what he considers to be a balanced estimate of our entire poetic literature, without allowing the triumphs of the Augustan epoch more than a brief and, as a rule, unenthusiastic side-glance. Once the most popular, widely read and frequently quoted of English men of letters, Alexander Pope has not yet quite recovered from the abuse that was showered on him by nineteenth-century critics. Some time ago, for example, having been asked to speak to a society of Oxford undergraduates about any subject that interested me, I suggested discussing Pope, but was coldly if courteously informed by my sponsor that the mere mention of Pope's name 'touched him off like a time-bomb'. I gathered that an interest in Pope implied an attitude of frivolous indifference towards the literary problems of the present day: that Pope was unreal, Pope was artificial; that to admire Pope was to be an

escapist-beast, guilty of a particularly crude form of intellectual cowardice.

The fact that, after many decades, he can still provoke violent criticism is a sure indication of any writer's magnitude. It was, of course, natural and inevitable that the Romantic Movement should produce among poets and critics a vigorous revulsion against the Augustan master's influence. Of his translations of Homer, Southey declared that 'no other work in the language so greatly vitiated the diction of English poetry'; Hazlitt observed that 'his mind was the antithesis of strength and grandeur . . . he had none of the enthusiasm of poetry; he was in poetry what the sceptic is in religion'; while De Quincey, after accusing him of slipshod versification, vicious syntax and numerous offences against 'philosophic truth', finally denied him any merit as a satirist. These attacks were sufficiently far-fetched; but when Wordsworth and Coleridge preferred the verses of Bowles, that most insignificant and insipid of nineteenth-century poetasters, they showed that they were rebelling not so much against Pope's real qualities (which were temporarily hidden from them by the prejudices of their time and school) as against his effect on his imitators and a number of pernicious qualities which they themselves attributed. Pope's success had been too complete. He had left too deep and too lasting a mark on the imagination of his countrymen, who had made him a criterion of taste, by which they judged and found wanting the work of modern writers. Hence he was an obstacle in the path of poetic progress. Pope, moreover, was thoroughly identified with the tastes and spiritual tendencies of the generation that produced him; and every generation is bound to reject the

authority of its own immediate forbears. Today, however, Pope's identification with his epoch is a further source of interest. In most epochs (I have suggested elsewhere) 'language is either a little in advance of, or has fallen a little behind, the requirements of the subject-matter with which it deals'. Thus, in the sixteenth century we remark a rich and complex form of expression arising out of a society still comparatively uncivilized; while during the twentieth we have watched literature trying in vain to catch up with the bewildering variety and complexity of contemporary experience. 'During the Augustan period, the growth of language and the development of the contemporary consciousness would appear almost exactly to have coincided, and a perfect balance was established between manner and subject-matter.' Pope was not in advance of, he was completely abreast of his time: with the result that at an early age he achieved a degree of recognition probably granted to no other English poet:

*Granville* the polite,  
 And knowing *Walsh*, would tell me I could write;  
 Well-natur'd *Garth* inflam'd with early praise,  
 And *Congreve* lov'd, and Swift endur'd my lays:  
 The courtly *Talbot*, *Somers*, *Sheffield* read,  
 Ev'n mitred *Rochester* would nod the head,  
 And *St. John's* self (great *Dryden's* friends before)  
 With open arms receiv'd one Poet more.

Because our interest in English verse commonly begins with the ill-starred Romantic poets, we are apt to assume that a poet whose merits are at once recognized must necessarily be inferior. This I believe to be untrue. Every artist, no matter how revolutionary, aims at recognition; and early recognition, on the rare

occasions when it comes the artist's way, enables him to cultivate virtues that he often fails to achieve, or is obliged to disregard, if he is writing in a perpetual passion without benefit of readers. Pope was sure of his audience: he knew himself to be addressing the whole body of what he called 'polite society', the great assemblage of educated men and women who shared his tastes and standards. Not that Pope is admirable merely in as much as he gave polished literary expression to the whims and preferences of contemporary taste. Other writers performed that service more or less adequately—the Youngs and the Parnells, the Thomsons and the Tickells. My point is that since, instead of struggling against the current of his age, he was able to swim smoothly, masterfully with it—luckier in this respect than his successors—he could cultivate his individual gifts with the care and patience that they needed.

Among his chief assets was an extraordinarily delicate ear. Few poets are more variously musical, or infuse with greater powers of suggestion a single line or couplet. As the author of an important essay *On the Poetry of Pope*<sup>1</sup> usefully reminds us, the couplet of which Pope declared himself to be particularly proud was not one of those polished generalizations with which his less intelligent readers commonly associate him, but a passage that Keats might have selected and which is, indeed, as harmonious and evocative as anything in Romantic verse:

Lo! where Maeotis sleeps, and hardly flows  
The freezing Tanais thro' a waste of snows.

That couplet is justly celebrated; but the reader as he

<sup>1</sup> *On the Poetry of Pope*, by Geoffrey Tillotson. Clarendon Press, 1938.

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goes along can pick out many others—lines that transcend their subject, that open before the mind's eye some wide imaginative vista, some gigantic historical prospect, where

... Volga's banks with iron squadrons shine  
And groves of lances glitter on the Rhine

or some glimpse into the mysterious intricacies of the natural world around us. While the Romantics often achieved—or sought to achieve—an effect of emotional intensity at the expense of verbal clarity, Pope never sacrifices his meaning to his music: for in the heroic couplet he had perfected a vehicle of expression that suited his genius as perfectly as blank verse suited Shakespeare's, in which his antithetical turn and his love of precision and symmetry found an outlet, no less than the sensuous and visionary qualities by which they were accompanied. In the hands of a smaller poet, the couplet-form has obvious drawbacks: it impedes the flow of his eloquence, breaks up the pattern of the poem: we are aware of each couplet as an independent structure, fitted like a separate block of mosaic into the design he is elaborating. Pope, on the other hand, makes of every couplet an individual feat of workmanship—two lines ingeniously married, each line usually consisting of complementary but contrasted halves—then, from a series of couplets proceeds to build up a lengthy verse paragraph in which both the music and meaning stream continuously forward. Consider, for example, his magnificently savage attack on his bitter personal foe, the effeminate Lord Hervey. Anatomizing these twenty-five lines, you will perceive that Pope, for the purposes of his invective, introduces in rapid succession a dozen different images. Hervey, the

courtier, is a gilded but noxious insect : a spaniel which mumbles the game it dare not bite or rend ; he smiles like a shallow stream ; he is the puppet of a powerful statesman and a Miltonic toad seated at the Queen's ear. Next his literary tricks receive attention :

His wit all see-saw between *that* and *thus*,  
Now high, now low, now master up, now miss,  
And he himself one vile antithesis.

—an idea which, by a clever transition, the satirist relates to the alleged ambiguity of his victim's sexual temperament :

Amphibious thing! that acting either part,  
The trifling head or the corrupted heart!  
Fop at the toilet, flatt'rer at the board,  
Now trips a lady, and now struts a lord.  
*Eve's* tempter thus the Rabbins have exprest,  
A cherub's face, a reptile all the rest,  
Beauty that shocks you, parts that none will trust,  
Wit that can creep, and pride that licks the dust.

Thanks to the poet's astonishing artistry, every image increases the cumulative impression and adds something to the vividness of the images that have gone before it.

Such a passage, Pope's detractors may argue, is not primarily poetic. Literary invective, at least—particularly when its origins are personal—is not the highest plane to which the poetic spirit is capable of climbing. Let us turn, then, to the lines, hardly less celebrated, which occur in Book IV of *The Dunciad* and show the Divinity of the Dunces conducting a hopeful young Englishman upon the eighteenth-century grand tour :

To where the Seine, obsequious as she runs,  
Pours at great Bourbon's feet her silken sons;

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Or Tyber, now no longer Roman, rolls,  
Vain of Italian arts, Italian souls :  
To happy convents, bosom'd deep in vines,  
Where slumber abbots, purple as their wines :  
To isles of fragrance, lilly-silver'd vales,  
Diffusing languor in the panting gales :  
To lands of singing, or of dancing slaves,  
Love-whisp'ring woods, and lute-resounding waves.  
But chief her shrine where naked Venus keeps,  
And Cupids ride the lion of the deeps ;  
Where, eas'd of fleets, the Adriatic main  
Wafts the smooth eunuch and enamour'd swain.  
Led by my hand, he saunter'd Europe round,  
And gather'd every vice on Christian ground. . . .

I have transcribed this passage at length because, perhaps more completely than any other, it illustrates the width of Pope's range and his ability to reconcile poetic qualities seldom found in combination. Its romantic richness need not be underlined; and, the more often one reads it, the more captivating appears its verbal harmony: Pope's use of alliteration, at times a little too marked, is in the passage quoted above equally skilful and unobtrusive: while his addiction to sibilant sounds—characteristic of all his poems—gives to the movement of his verse a rushing slivery smoothness. But, besides its appeal to the ear and, through the ear, to that side of our nature which delights in purely sensuous beauty—enjoying a poetic image immediately and uncritically before we have begun to analyse it—the lines glow with ironic intelligence, with wit so shrewdly employed that it is not at once perceptible. The Adriatic has been '*eas'd* of fleets'; for, though their commerce has failed and their ancient empire fallen, the happy citizens of Venice find that, as their



responsibility diminishes, their *joie de vivre* increases, till the Adriatic, lightened of the burden they had at one time laid upon it, seems to laugh around their marble foundations in unaccustomed liberty, well-pleased to transport them on their daily and nightly pleasures. . . .

While Pope's sense of beauty was always at work—transforming, sooner or later, every subject that he touched on—his wit was never dormant. The nineteenth-century poets, excepting Byron, generally distrusted wit: it was, they felt, both incompatible with poetic dignity and irreconcilable with that high seriousness, the mood of sustained visionary enthusiasm, on which true poetry depended. Wit, they decided, was artificial; and Pope, since he abounded in wit, was the laureate of the social world and its artificial interests. He was, observed Hazlitt, 'the poet of personality and of polished life. That which was nearest to him, was the greatest; the fashion of the day bore sway in his mind over the immutable law of nature. He preferred the artificial to the natural in external objects. . . . He preferred the artificial to the natural in passion, because the involuntary and uncalculating impulses of the one hurried him away with a force and vehemence with which he could not grapple; while he could trifle with the conventional and superficial modifications of mere sentiment at will, laugh at or admire, put them on or off like a masquerade-dress, make much or little of them, indulge them for a longer or a shorter time, as he pleased; and because while they amused his fancy and exercised his ingenuity, they never once disturbed his vanity, his levity or indifference.' That Pope was insensible to nature, that on his poetic progress he rarely moved outside his garden or far

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beyond his grotto, can be sufficiently disproved by the briefest study of his writings. True, he did not respond to nature as Wordsworth or Shelley responded. Mountains and lakes and clouds were not apt to stir him to flights of pantheistic rhapsody. But that he responded in his own fashion—that twilight, the sound of distant bells, a summer garden, the prospect of flooded meadows, with sails veering to and fro where he and his friends had walked, were capable now and then of moving him profoundly—we discover from numerous passages of his private correspondence. In his verse, as a general rule, he preferred the minute to the extensive; but his minute observations of natural objects are almost always fascinating, and his evocations of the spider and the nautilus

The spider's touch, how exquisitely fine!  
 Feels at each thread, and lives along the line . . .  
 Learn of the little Nautilus to sail,  
 Spread the thin oar, and catch the driving gale.

and his brilliant and unexpected vision of a fantastic world among the grass-roots

. . . The green myriads in the peopled grass

live as long in the reader's memory as many better-known Romantic images.

Pope's attitude towards mankind, however, raises quite another question. Was his preoccupation with society excessive? Can we dismiss him as the time-serving courtier of his own age, making elaborate play with established social usages, whom De Quincey abused and Hazlitt coolly denigrated? 'A poet of personality' no doubt he was. But he was much

besides; and we must add that, far from dragging down poetry to the level of personal life and passing social interests, Pope uses wit, social observation and satirical worldly wisdom as prime ingredients of poetry. He is perpetually elevating his subject-matter, enlarging and transfiguring it. The victims of his satire acquire a tragic amplitude. A group of old women, beauties in their day, now huddled round a card-table, are presented originally as comic, but eventually as tragic, figures

Beauties, like tyrants, old and friendless grown,  
Yet hate repose and dread to be alone . . .

—monuments to the inevitable decay of youth and grace and innocence. Similarly, in his *Characters of Women*, the second and probably the best of his enchanting *Moral Essays*, he analyses his sitters, their foibles, vices, follies, as carefully and dispassionately as any nineteenth-century novelist, and thereupon throws the results of his analysis into the magic crucible of poetry, from which emerges a *Calypso* or a *Chloe*, a *Narcissa* or a *Flavia*. The wit is abundant and ferocious:

Narcissa's nature, tolerably mild,  
To make a wash, would hardly stew a child;  
Has ev'n been proved to grant a lover's pray'r,  
And paid a tradesman once to make him stare;  
Gave alms at Easter, in a Christian trim,  
And made a widow happy, for a whim.

But again and again, though the wit does not disappear, it blends with, and is assimilated by, a deeper strain of feeling. Thus, to satirical verisimilitude the portrait of *Flavia* adds a quality more easily recognized than described, for which 'poetic truth' seems the most convenient label:

Wise wretch<sup>1</sup> with pleasures too refin'd to please;  
 With too much spirit to be e'er at ease:  
 With too much quickness ever to be taught;  
 With too much thinking to have common thought:  
 You purchase pain with all that joy can give,  
 And die of nothing but a rage to live.

When *Characters of Women* first appeared, Pope's fashionable readers at once set out delightedly on a search for the originals. Atossa

The wisest fool much time has ever made

was evidently Sarah Duchess of Marlborough: and the blameless and heartless Chloe, who

. . . While her lover paints upon her breast,  
 Can mark the figures on an Indian chest:  
 And when she sees her friend in deep despair  
 Observes how much a chintz exceeds mohair.

was generally taken to represent the famous Mrs. Howard, George II's favourite, afterwards elevated to the peerage with the title of the Countess of Suffolk. Today the portraits are still fresh and living, though the women they delineate, except by an occasional student or historian, are very seldom recollected. Behind Flavia, with her all-consuming, self-destructive egotism, stretches a landscape much wider than that of eighteenth-century court-life.

If *The Dunciad* and his *Moral Essays* show Pope's wit at its most astringent and his imaginative gifts at their most remarkable, *The Rape of the Lock* is without question his most perfect poem. Originally composed as a *jeu d'esprit* to effect a reconciliation between two warring families, the Fermors and the Petres (who had fallen out over a 'frolick of gallantry' undertaken

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by Lord Petre at the expense of Miss Arabella Fermor's cherished side-curl), it was subsequently enlarged and remodelled till, with the addition of the delicate supernatural machinery, which Pope would appear to have borrowed from Rosicrucian literature, it became, in Johnson's words, 'the most airy, the most ingenious, and the most delightful, of all his compositions'. A mixture of airiness and solidity, of grace and strength, of delicate vernal gaiety and incisive social satire, it is one of those works of art which completely fulfil their promise and seem exactly suited to the aesthetic purpose for which they were intended. Only Pope, we feel, could have so cleverly tempered the lyric with the epic; for Pope (as Geoffrey Tillotson writes) 'may be said to excel all English poets in his combination of size with minuteness'; and just as passages of exquisite fun, such as the portrayal of Sir Plume, are accompanied by verses that bring us down to earth with a sudden and almost savage vehemence,

Meanwhile, declining from the noon of day,  
The sun obliquely shoots his burning ray;  
The hungry judges soon the sentence sign,  
And wretches hang that jury-men may dine . . .

so, at regular intervals, we notice a line, usually at the conclusion of some descriptive paragraph, which has the sweep and breadth of effect that belongs to epic poetry. The arrival of these majestic visitants is always unexpected.

The merchant from th' Exchange returns in peace  
does nothing to prepare us for the eight simple magnificently assorted words with which Pope rounds off the couplet

And the long labours of the toilet cease

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where one syllable, the adjective *long*, invests the operation of feminine rising and dressing with an air of supernatural dignity, and reminds us of the 'rites of pride' already depicted in the poem's opening canto.

Whereas *The Rape of the Lock* is a poem that the least persevering lover of poetry will find no difficulty in reading from beginning to end with continuous enjoyment, the *Essay on Man*, it must be admitted, presents a somewhat weightier problem. Neither as a poetic venture nor as an exposition of personal philosophy does this lengthy and ambitious work strike us, after more than two hundred years, as altogether satisfying. The fault is in the design itself. Pope, we are told, embarked on the *Essay* at the suggestion of Lord Bolingbroke, who supplied a number of propositions drawn up in prose, which his friend proceeded to array in appropriate poetic finery. Since Bolingbroke was a free-thinker, while Pope was a born Catholic with certain leanings towards Deism, the product of their collaboration is, from a doctrinal point, often somewhat curious. And it is significant that Pope should have begun by depicting the terrestrial scene as

A mighty maze of walks without a plan

but on second thoughts have altered the line to read

A mighty maze, but not without a plan.

Around the momentous question of this plan—in what it consists, and how and where it is to be distinguished—Pope continues to revolve with measured but inconclusive eloquence. The poem includes many splendid outbursts—none more splendid than the verses in which the author describes the limitations of sensibility by which the human mind must abide if we are not to overreach ourselves:

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The bliss of man (could pride that blessing find)  
 Is not to act or think beyond mankind;  
 No pow'rs of body or of soul to share,  
 But what his nature and his state can bear. . . .  
 Say what the use, were finer optics giv'n,  
 T' inspect a mite, not comprehend the heav'n?  
 Or touch, if tremblingly alive all o'er,  
 To smart and agonise at ev'ry pore?  
 Or quick effluvia darting through the brain,  
 Die of a rose in aromatic pain? . . .

But they are apt to strike us as a trifle irrelevant, stately pieces of ornament attached to a rather shaky fabric; for, in the *Essay on Man*, as a late Victorian<sup>1</sup> has pointed out, while 'the art of Milton works from within, fusing all the materials into one solid mass', that of Pope 'begins by elaborating the parts and afterwards endeavours to fit them together by plastering over the interstices'. Throughout the ages, few philosophical poems have been entirely happy; and the project that Pope had undertaken was equally unsuited to the mood of his time and to the peculiar qualities of his own poetic temperament.

Some of these qualities I have already cited. It remains to mention the capacity for deep and even violent feeling which may be divined in almost all his poems, from *Eloisa to Abelard* and the *Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady* onwards to *The Dunciad* and the *Moral Essays*. For Pope was by no means the ingenious but insensitive trifler, dallying with the 'conventional and superficial modifications of mere sentiment', that his detractors have pretended. His biography shows that his emotions were strong, though lodged in a weak, deformed and unimpressive

<sup>1</sup>Professor J. B. Mayo

body. On two occasions at least, he loved with passion; and in both instances the passion that possessed him was ultimately disappointed. He loved Martha and Theresa Blount; and he had loved Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, to whom as *Sappho* he was afterwards to dedicate some of his most venomous couplets; but before his adoration had turned to hatred, when she laughed in his face and rejected his protestations, Lady Mary was to elicit the only direct expression of personal suffering to be found in the whole of his collected verse. Gay had congratulated him on finishing the miniature pleasure-grounds around his house at Twickenham; and Pope replied in a verse-letter of unusual grace and poignancy:

Ah friend, 'tis true—this truth you lovers know—  
In vain my structures rise, my gardens grow. . . .

What are the gay parterre, the chequered shade,  
The morning bower, the evening colonnade,  
But soft recesses of uneasy minds,  
To sigh unheard in to the passing winds?  
So the struck deer in some sequestered part  
Lies down to die, the arrow at his heart;  
There stretched unseen in coverts hid from day,  
Bleeds drop by drop; and pants his life away.

Otherwise Pope differed from earlier and later poets, not so much in the scope, strength and authenticity of his emotions, as in the employment that he made of them. Passion, if we except the lines quoted above, seldom thrusts towards the surface: and one of the causes of his comparative unpopularity among a certain class of readers (who wish to see emotions they have themselves experienced boldly reflected by the books they open) is that, unlike Catullus or Donne,



unlike Coleridge or Shelley, he never gives unashamed poetic utterance to violent personal feelings. But beneath the surface there is feeling in plenty—the passionate hatred aroused by Sporus, the voluptuous melancholy to which the contemplation of women and their fated decline, from youth to age, from conquering beauty to maundering or spiteful absurdity, now and then inspired him. He can hardly have loved literature more than he loved life. In his own opinion, he was a man of the world,

The gayest valetudinaire,  
Most thinking rake, alive. . . .

Irritable, proud, capricious, with few of the virtues he professed to admire and no doubt sought to emulate, he was an amorist to whom his reward was denied, a warm-hearted and a high-minded friend whom the irascibility which sprang from infirmity was perpetually plunging into ferocious private quarrels. But, although he clung to and relished life, he was too good an artist not to put literature first in his adult scale of values. Feeling must submit to discipline; and thus it came about that Pope's verse often reminds us of the masterpieces of a Chinese poet or painter who achieves effects of individual beauty through the deliberate use of a conventional aesthetic idiom. Pope's poetry has a decidedly conventional aspect. 'Nymphs', 'groves', 'swains', omnipotent Olympian deities—here is all the apparatus of classical eighteenth-century literature. The surface of his work is conventionally smooth, conventionally accomplished. We appreciate its gloss and bloom, but, looking a little closer, notice the extreme originality with which established forms are handled. Take a single line and attempt to dissect it:

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significance, we become aware, has been packed into every adjective and adverb. The choice and the arrangement of words could have been made, we are obliged to agree, by no other English poet. Pope's signature is as decisive and as unmistakable as that of a Chaucer or a Shakespeare.

In this volume, I have done my best to bring together a representative selection of Pope's literary achievements. Much has necessarily been excluded; but it includes the *Essay on Criticism*, published in 1711; *Windsor Forest*, as an interesting specimen of Pope's earlier pastoral manner; the second version of *The Rape of the Lock*, which appeared in 1714; the two 'Gothick' poems, the *Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady* and *Eloisa to Abelard*, published in 1717; large selections from *The Dunciad*, which began to emerge in 1728, and the entire *Essay on Man*, of which the opening Epistle saw the light in 1732; and all five *Moral Essays*; as well as the *Imitations of Horace*, which reached the public in 1737, and a choice of miscellaneous poems. Such a selection, since the translations have been omitted, is, of course, fragmentary. It should be wide enough, however, to provide the uninstructed or unsympathetic reader with an introduction to Pope's genius, and to allow him a foretaste of pleasures still in store for him should he care to dig more deeply. This book is planned to give pleasure; and in the present crisis of the world's affairs, when mankind as a whole seems to be losing faith in itself and losing touch with happiness, no source of deep, lasting, dispassionate enjoyment may reasonably be disregarded.

PETER QUENNELL



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# THE PLEASURES OF POPE

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## WINDSOR FOREST

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
GEORGE, LORD LANSDOWN

Non injussa cano: Te nostræ, *Vare*, myricæ,  
Te *Nemus* omne canet; nec Phœbo gratior ulla est  
Quam sibi quæ *Vari* præscripsit pagina nomen.

VIRG. [*Ecl.* VI. 10–12.]

THY forests, Windsor! and thy green retreats,  
At once the Monarch's and the Muse's seats,  
Invite my lays. Be present, sylvan maids!  
Unlock your springs, and open all your shades.  
GRANVILLE commands; your aid, O Muses, bring!  
What Muse for GRANVILLE can refuse to sing?

The Groves of Eden, vanish'd now so long,  
Live in description, and look green in song:  
These, were my breast inspir'd with equal flame,  
Like them in beauty, should be like in fame.  
Here hills and vales, the woodland and the plain,  
Here earth and water seem to strive again;  
Not Chaos-like together crush'd and bruis'd,  
But, as the world, harmoniously confus'd:  
Where order in variety we see,  
And where, tho' all things differ, all agree.  
Here waving groves a chequer'd scene display,  
And part admit, and part exclude the day;  
As some coy nymph her lover's warm address  
Nor quite indulges, nor can quite repress.

There, interspers'd in lawns and op'ning glades,  
Thin trees arise that shun each other's shades.  
Here in full light the russet plains extend:  
There wrapt in clouds the blueish hills ascend.  
Ev'n the wild heath displays her purple dyes,  
And 'midst the desert fruitful fields arise,  
That crown'd with tufted trees and springing corn,  
Like verdant isles the sable waste adorn.  
Let India boast her plants, nor envy we  
The weeping amber or the balmy tree,  
While by our oaks the precious loads are born,  
And realms commanded which those trees adorn.  
Not proud Olympus yields a nobler sight,  
Tho' Gods assembled grace his tow'ring height,  
Than what more humble mountains offer here,  
Where, in their blessings, all those Gods appear.  
See Pan with flocks, with fruits Pomona crown'd,  
Here blushing Flora paints th' enamel'd ground,  
Here Ceres' gifts in waving prospect stand,  
And nodding tempt the joyful reaper's hand;  
Rich Industry sits smiling on the plains,  
And peace and plenty tell, a STUART reigns.  
Not thus the land appear'd in ages past,  
A dreary desert, and a gloomy waste,  
To savage beasts and savage laws a prey,  
And kings more furious and severe than they;  
Who claim'd the skies, dispeopled air and floods,  
The lonely lords of empty wilds and woods:  
Cities laid waste, they storm'd the dens and caves,  
(For wiser brutes were backward to be slaves:)  
What could be free, when lawless beasts obey'd,  
And ev'n the elements a tyrant sway'd?  
In vain kind seasons swell'd the teeming grain,  
Soft show'rs distill'd, and suns grew warm in vain;

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The swain with tears his frustrate labour yields,  
And famish'd dies amidst his ripen'd fields.  
What wonder then, a beast or subject slain  
Were equal crimes in a despotic reign?  
Both doom'd alike, for sportive Tyrants bled,  
But while the subject starv'd, the beast was fed.  
Proud Nimrod first the bloody chase began,  
A mighty hunter, and his prey was man:  
Our haughty Norman boasts that barb'rous name,  
And makes his trembling slaves the royal game.  
The fields are ravish'd from th' industrious swains,  
From men their cities, and from Gods their fanes:  
The levell'd towns with weeds lie cover'd o'er;  
The hollow winds thro' naked temples roar;  
Round broken columns clasping ivy twin'd;  
O'er heaps of ruin stalk'd the stately hind;  
The fox obscene to gaping tombs retires,  
And savage howlings fill the sacred quires.  
Aw'd by his Nobles, by his Commons curst,  
Th' Oppressor rul'd tyrannic where he durst,  
Stretch'd o'er the Poor and Church his iron rod,  
And serv'd alike his Vassals and his God.  
Whom ev'n the Saxon spar'd and bloody Dane,  
The wanton victims of his sport remain.  
But see, the man who spacious regions gave  
A waste for beasts, himself deny'd a grave!  
Stretch'd on the lawn his second hope survey,  
At once the chaser, and at once the prey:  
Lo Rufus, tugging at the deadly dart,  
Bleeds in the Forest like a wounded hart.  
Succeeding monarchs heard the subjects' cries,  
Nor saw displeas'd the peaceful cottage rise.  
Then gath'ring flocks on unknown mountains fed,  
O'er sandy wilds were yellow harvests spread,

The forests wonder'd at th' unusual grain,  
And secret transport touch'd the conscious swain.  
Fair Liberty, Britannia's Goddess, rears  
Her cheerful head, and leads the golden years.

Ye vig'rous swains! while youth ferments your blood,  
And purer spirits swell the sprightly flood,  
Now range the hills, the gameful woods beset,  
Wind the shrill horn, or spread the waving net.  
When milder autumn summer's heat succeeds,  
And in the new-shorn field the partridge feeds,  
Before his lord the ready spaniel bounds,  
Panting with hope, he tries the furrow'd grounds;  
But when the tainted gales the game betray,  
Couch'd close he lies, and meditates the prey:  
Secure they trust th' unfaithful field beset,  
'Till hov'ring o'er 'em sweeps the swelling net.  
Thus (if small things we may with great compare)  
When Albion sends her eager sons to war,  
Some thoughtless Town, with ease and plenty blest,  
Near, and more near, the closing lines invest;  
Sudden they seize th' amaz'd, defenceless prize,  
And high in air Britannia's standard flies.

See! from the brake the whirring pheasant springs,  
And mounts exulting on triumphant wings:  
Short is his joy; he feels the fiery wound,  
Flutters in blood, and panting beats the ground.  
Ah! what avail his glossy, varying dyes,  
His purple crest, and scarlet-circled eyes,  
The vivid green his shining plumes unfold,  
His painted wings, and breast that flames with gold?

Nor yet, when moist Arcturus clouds the sky,  
The woods and fields their pleasing toils deny.  
To plains with well-breath'd beagles we repair,  
And trace the mazes of the circling hare:

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(Beasts, urg'd by us, their fellow-beasts pursue,  
And learn of man each other to undo).  
With slaught'ring guns th' unwearied fowler roves,  
When frosts have whiten'd all the naked groves;  
Where doves in flocks the leafless trees o'ershade,  
And lonely woodcocks haunt the wat'ry glade.  
He lifts the tube, and levels with his eye;  
Straight a short thunder breaks the frozen sky:  
Oft, as in airy rings they skim the heath,  
The clam'rous lapwings feel the leaden death:  
Oft, as the mounting larks their notes prepare,  
They fall, and leave their little lives in air.

In genial spring, beneath the quivering shade,  
Where cooling vapours breathe along the mead,  
The patient fisher takes his silent stand,  
Intent, his angle trembling in his hand:  
With looks unmov'd, he hopes the scaly breed,  
And eyes the dancing cork, and bending reed.  
Our plenteous streams a various race supply,  
The bright-ey'd perch with fins of Tyrian dye.  
The silver eel, in shining volumes roll'd,  
The yellow carp, in scales bedropp'd with gold,  
Swift trouts, diversified with crimson stains,  
And pikes, the tyrants of the wat'ry plains.

Now Cancer glows with Phœbus' fiery car:  
The youth rush eager to the sylvan war,  
Swarm o'er the lawns, the forest walks surround,  
Rouse the fleet hart, and cheer the opening hound.  
Th' impatient courser pants in every vein,  
And, pawing, seems to beat the distant plain:  
Hills, vales, and floods appear already cross'd,  
And ere he starts, a thousand steps are lost.  
See the bold youth strain up the threat'ning steep,  
Rush thro' the thickets, down the valleys sweep,



Hang o'er their coursers' heads with eager speed,  
And earth rolls back beneath the flying steed.  
Let old Arcadia boast her ample plain,  
Th' immortal huntress, and her virgin train;  
Nor envy, Windsor! since thy shades have seen  
As bright a Goddess, and as chaste a Queen;  
Whose care, like hers, protects the sylvan reign,  
The Earth's fair light, and Empress of the main.

Here too, 'tis sung, of old Diana stray'd,  
And Cynthus' top forsook for Windsor shade:  
Here was she seen o'er airy wastes to rove,  
Seek the clear spring, or haunt the pathless grove;  
Here arm'd with silver bows, in early dawn,  
Her buskin'd Virgins trac'd the dewy lawn.

Above the rest a rural nymph was fam'd,  
Thy offspring, Thames! the fair Lodona nam'd;  
(Lodona's fate, in long oblivion cast,  
The Muse shall sing, and what she sings shall last).  
Scarce could the Goddess from her nymph be known,  
But by the crescent and the golden zone.  
She scorn'd the praise of beauty, and the care;  
A belt her waist, a fillet binds her hair;  
A painted quiver on her shoulder sounds,  
And with her dart the flying deer she wounds.  
It chanc'd, as eager of the chase, the maid  
Beyond the forest's verdant limits stray'd,  
Pan saw and lov'd, and, burning with desire,  
Pursued her flight; her flight increas'd his fire.  
Not half so swift the trembling doves can fly,  
When the fierce eagle cleaves the liquid sky;  
Not half so swiftly the fierce eagle moves,  
When thro' the clouds he drives the trembling doves;  
As from the god she flew with furious pace,  
Or as the god, more furious, urg'd the chase.

Now fainting, sinking, pale, the nymph appears;  
Now close behind, his sounding steps she hears;  
And now his shadow reach'd her as she run,  
His shadow lengthen'd by the setting sun;  
And now his shorter breath, with sultry air,  
Pants on her neck, and fans her parting hair.  
In vain on father Thames she calls for aid,  
Nor could Diana help her injur'd maid.  
Faint, breathless, thus she pray'd, nor pray'd in vain;  
'Ah, Cynthia! ah—tho' banish'd from thy train,  
Let me, O let me, to the shades repair,  
My native shades—there weep, and murmur there.'  
She said, and melting as in tears she lay,  
In a soft, silver stream dissolv'd away.  
The silver stream her virgin coldness keeps,  
For ever murmurs, and for ever weeps;  
Still bears the name the hapless virgin bore,  
And bathes the forest where she rang'd before.  
In her chaste current oft the goddess laves,  
And with celestial tears augments the waves.  
Oft in her glass the musing shepherd spies  
The headlong mountains and the downward skies,  
The wat'ry landscape of the pendant woods,  
And absent trees that tremble in the floods;  
In the clear azure gleam the flocks are seen,  
And floating forests paint the waves with green,  
Thro' the fair scene roll slow the lingering streams,  
Then foaming pour along, and rush into the Thames.  
Thou, too, great father of the British floods!  
With joyful pride survey'st our lofty woods;  
Where tow'ring oaks their growing honours rear,  
And future navies on thy shores appear.  
Not Neptune's self from all her streams receives  
A wealthier tribute than to thine he gives.

No seas so rich, so gay no banks appear,  
No lake so gentle, and no spring so clear.  
Nor Po so swells the fabling Poet's lays,  
While led along the skies his current strays,  
As thine, which visits Windsor's fam'd abodes,  
To grace the mansion of our earthly Gods:  
Nor all his stars above a lustre show,  
Like the bright Beauties on thy banks below,  
Where Jove, subdued by mortal Passion still,  
Might change Olympus for a nobler hill.

Happy the man whom this bright court approves,  
His Sov'reign favours, and his Country loves:  
Happy next him, who to these shades retires,  
Whom Nature charms, and whom the Muse inspires:  
Whom humbler joys of home-felt quiet please,  
Successive study, exercise, and ease.  
He gathers health from herbs the forest yields,  
And of their fragrant physic spoils the fields:  
With chymic art exalts the min'ral pow'rs,  
And draws the aromatic souls of flow'rs:  
Now marks the course of rolling orbs on high;  
O'er figur'd worlds now travels with his eye;  
Of ancient writ unlocks the learned store,  
Consults the dead, and lives past ages o'er:  
Or wand'ring thoughtful in the silent wood,  
Attends the duties of the wise and good,  
T' observe a mean, be to himself a friend,  
To follow nature, and regard his end;  
Or looks on heav'n with more than mortal eyes,  
Bids his free soul expatiate in the skies,  
Amid her kindred stars familiar roam,  
Survey the region, and confess her home!  
Such was the life great Scipio once admir'd:—  
Thus Atticus, and Trumbal thus retir'd.

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Ye sacred Nine! that all my soul possess,  
Whose raptures fire me, and whose visions bless,  
Bear me, O bear me to sequester'd scenes,  
The bow'ry mazes, and surrounding greens:  
To Thames's banks, which fragrant breezes fill,  
Or where ye Muses sport on Cooper's Hill.  
(On Cooper's Hill eternal wreaths shall grow,  
While lasts the mountain, or while Thames shall  
flow.)

I seem thro' consecrated walks to rove,  
I hear soft music die along the grove:  
Led by the sound, I roam from shade to shade,  
By god-like Poets venerable made:  
Here his first lays majestic Denham sung;  
There the last numbers flow'd from Cowley's tongue.  
Oh early lost! what tears the river shed,  
When the sad pomp along his banks was led?  
His drooping swans on every note expire,  
And on his willows hung each muse's lyre.

Since fate relentless stopp'd their heavenly voice,  
No more the forests ring, or groves rejoice;  
Who now shall charm the shades where Cowley  
strung

His living harp, and lofty Denham sung?  
But hark! the groves rejoice, the forest rings!  
Are these reviv'd? or is it Granville sings?  
'Tis yours, my Lord, to bless our soft retreats,  
And call the Muses to their ancient seats;  
To paint anew the flow'ry sylvan scenes,  
To crown the forests with immortal greens,  
Make Windsor-hills in lofty numbers rise,  
And lift her turrets nearer to the skies;  
To sing those honours you deserve to wear,  
And add new lustre to her silver star!

Here noble Surrey felt the sacred rage,  
 Surrey, the Granville of a former age:  
 Matchless his pen, victorious was his lance,  
 Bold in the lists, and graceful in the dance:  
 In the same shades the Cupids tun'd his lyre,<sup>1</sup>  
 To the same notes, of love, and soft desire:  
 Fair Geraldine, bright object of his vow,  
 Then fill'd the groves, as heav'nly Mira now.<sup>2</sup>

Oh wouldst thou sing what heroes Windsor bore,  
 What Kings first breath'd upon her winding shore,  
 Or raise old warriors, whose ador'd remains  
 In weeping vaults her hallow'd earth contains!  
 With Edward's acts<sup>3</sup> adorn the shining page,  
 Stretch his long triumphs down through every age,  
 Draw monarchs chain'd, and Cressi's glorious field,  
 The lilies blazing on the regal shield:  
 Then, from her roofs when Verrio's colours fall,  
 And leave inanimate the naked wall;  
 Still in thy song should vanquish'd France appear,  
 And bleed for ever under Britain's spear.

Let softer strains ill-fated Henry mourn,<sup>4</sup>  
 And palms eternal flourish round his urn.  
 Here o'er the martyr-king the marble weeps,  
 And, fast beside him, once-fear'd Edward sleeps:<sup>5</sup>  
 Whom not th' extended Albion could contain,  
 From old Belerium<sup>6</sup> to the northern main,  
 The grave unites; where e'en the great find rest,  
 And blended lie th' oppressor and th' opprest!

Make sacred Charles's tomb for ever known  
 (Obscure the place, and uninscrib'd the stone),

<sup>1</sup>Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, revered by Pope as 'one of the first refiners of the English poetry; who flourished in the time of Henry VIII'.

<sup>2</sup>The heroine of Granville's verse. <sup>3</sup>Edward III. <sup>4</sup>Henry VI.

<sup>5</sup>Edward IV. <sup>6</sup>Land's End.

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Oh fact accurst! what tears has Albion shed,  
Heav'ns, what new wounds! and how her old have bled!  
She saw her sons with purple deaths expire,  
Her sacred domes involv'd in rolling fire,  
A dreadful series of intestine wars,  
Inglorious triumphs and dishonest scars.  
At length great Anna said, 'Let Discord cease!'  
She said! the world obey'd, and all was Peace!

In that blest moment from his oozy bed  
Old father Thames advanc'd his reverend head.  
His tresses dropp'd with dews, and o'er the stream  
His shining horns diffus'd a golden gleam:  
Grav'd on his urn appear'd the moon, that guides  
His swelling waters and alternate tides;  
The figur'd streams in waves of silver roll'd,  
And on their banks Augusta rose in gold.  
Around his throne the sea-born brothers stood,  
Who swell with tributary urns his flood;  
First the fam'd authors of his ancient name,  
The winding Isis, and the fruitful Thame:  
The Kennet swift, for silver eels renown'd;  
The Loddon slow, with verdant alders crown'd;  
Cole, whose dark streams his flowery islands lave;  
And chalky Wey, that rolls a milky wave:  
The blue, transparent Vandalis appears;  
The gulfy Lee his sedgy tresses rears;  
And sullen Mole, that hides his diving flood;  
And silent Darent, stain'd with Danish blood.

High in the midst, upon his urn reclin'd  
(His sea-green mantle waving with the wind),  
The god appear'd: he turn'd his azure eyes  
Where Windsor-domes and pompous turrets rise;  
Then bow'd and spoke; the winds forget to roar,  
And the hush'd waves glide softly to the shore.

Hail, sacred peace! hail, long-expected days,<sup>1</sup>  
 That Thames's glory to the stars shall raise!  
 Tho' Tiber's streams immortal Rome behold,  
 Tho' foaming Hermus swells with tides of gold,  
 From heav'n itself though sev'nfold Nilus flows,  
 And harvests on a hundred realms bestows;  
 These now no more shall be the Muse's themes,  
 Lost in my fame, as in the sea their streams.  
 Let Volga's banks with iron squadrons shine,  
 And groves of lances glitter on the Rhine,  
 Let barb'rous Ganges arm a servile train;  
 Be mine the blessings of a peaceful reign.  
 No more my sons shall dye with British blood  
 Red Iber's sands, or Ister's foaming flood:  
 Safe on my shore each unmolested swain  
 Shall tend the flocks, or reap the bearded grain;  
 The shady empire shall retain no trace  
 Of war or blood, but in the sylvan chase;  
 The trumpet sleep, while cheerful horns are blown,  
 And arms employ'd on birds and beasts alone.  
 Behold! th' ascending Villas on my side  
 Project long shadows o'er the crystal tide.  
 Behold! Augusta's glitt'ring spires increase,  
 And Temples rise, the beauteous works of Peace.  
 I see, I see, where two fair cities bend  
 Their ample bow, a new Whitehall ascend!  
 There mighty Nations shall inquire their doom,  
 The World's great Oracle in times to come;  
 There Kings shall sue, and suppliant States be seen  
 Once more to bend before a BRITISH QUEEN.  
 Thy trees, fair Windsor! now shall leave their woods,  
 And half thy forests rush into thy floods,

<sup>1</sup>Negotiations for European peace had been opened at Utrecht in January 1711.

Bear Britain's thunder, and her Cross display,  
To the bright regions of the rising day;  
Tempt icy seas, where scarce the waters roll,  
Where clearer flames glow round the frozen Pole:  
Or under southern skies exalt their sails,  
Led by new stars, and borne by spicy gales!  
For me the balm shall bleed, and amber flow,  
The coral redden, and the ruby glow,  
The pearly shell its lucid globe infold,  
And Phœbus warm the ripening ore to gold.  
The time shall come, when, free as seas or wind,  
Unbounded Thames shall flow for all mankind,  
Whole nations enter with each swelling tide,  
And seas but join the regions they divide;  
Earth's distant ends our glory shall behold,  
And the new world launch forth to seek the old.  
Then ships of uncouth form shall stem the tide,  
And feather'd people crowd my wealthy side,  
And naked youths and painted chiefs admire  
Our speech, our colour, and our strange attire!  
O stretch thy reign, fair Peace! from shore to shore,  
Till Conquest cease, and Slav'ry be no more;  
Till the freed Indians in their native groves  
Reap their own fruits, and woo their sable loves,  
Peru once more a race of kings behold,  
And other Mexico's be roof'd with gold.  
Exil'd by thee from earth to deepest hell,  
In brazen bonds shall barbarous Discord dwell;  
Gigantic Pride, pale Terror, gloomy Care,  
And mad Ambition, shall attend her there:  
There purple Vengeance bath'd in gore retires,  
Her weapons blunted, and extinct her fires:  
There hateful Envy her own snakes shall feel,  
And Persecution mourn her broken wheel:



There Faction roar, Rebellion bite her chain,  
And gasping Furies thirst for blood in vain.

Here cease thy flight, nor with unhallow'd lays  
Touch the fair fame of Albion's golden days:  
The thoughts of gods let Granville's verse recite,  
And bring the scenes of op'ning fate to light.  
My humble Muse, in unambitious strains,  
Paints the green forests and the flow'ry plains,  
Where Peace descending bids her olives spring,  
And scatters blessings from her dovelike wing.  
Ev'n I more sweetly pass my careless days,  
Pleas'd in the silent shade with empty praise;  
Enough for me, that to the list'ning swains  
First in these fields I sung the sylvan strains.

## AN ESSAY ON CRITICISM

Written in the Year MDCCIX when the Author  
was only twenty years old

'Tis hard to say, if greater want of skill  
Appear in writing or in judging ill;  
But, of the two, less dang'rous is th' offence  
To tire our patience, than mislead our sense.  
Some few in that, but numbers err in this,  
Ten censure wrong for one who writes amiss;  
A fool might once himself alone expose,  
Now one in verse makes many more in prose.

'Tis with our judgments as our watches, none  
Go just alike, yet each believes his own.  
In Poets as true genius is but rare,  
True Taste as seldom is the Critic's share;  
Both must alike from Heav'n derive their light,  
These born to judge, as well as those to write.  
Let such teach others who themselves excel,  
And censure freely who have written well.  
Authors are partial to their wit, 'tis true,  
But are not Critics to their judgment too?

Yet if we look more closely, we shall find  
Most have the seeds of judgment in their mind:  
Nature affords at least a glimm'ring light;  
The lines, tho' touch'd but faintly, are drawn right.  
But as the slightest sketch, if justly trac'd, }  
Is by ill-colouring but the more disgrac'd, }  
So by false learning is good sense defac'd: }  
Some are bewilder'd in the maze of schools,  
And some made coxcombs Nature meant but fools.  
In search of wit these lose their common sense,  
And then turn Critics in their own defence:

Each burns alike, who can, or cannot write,  
 Or with a Rival's, or an Eunuch's spite.  
 All fools have still an itching to deride,  
 And fain would be upon the laughing side.  
 If Mævius scribble in Apollo's spite,  
 There are who judge still worse than he can write.

Some have at first for Wits, then Poets past,  
 Turn'd Critics next, and prov'd plain fools at last.  
 Some neither can for Wits or Critics pass,  
 As heavy mules are neither horse nor ass.  
 Those half-learn'd wittings, num'rous in our isle,  
 As half-form'd insects on the banks of Nile;  
 Unfinish'd things, one knows not what to call,  
 Their generation's so equivocal:  
 To tell 'em, would a hundred tongues require,  
 Or one vain wit's, that might a hundred tire.

But you who seek to give and merit fame,  
 And justly bear a Critic's noble name,  
 Be sure yourself and your own reach to know,  
 How far your genius, taste, and learning go;  
 Launch not beyond your depth, but be discreet,  
 And mark that point where sense and dulness meet.

Nature to all things fix'd the limits fit,  
 And wisely curb'd proud man's pretending wit.  
 As on the land while here the ocean gains,  
 In other parts it leaves wide sandy plains;  
 Thus in the soul while memory prevails,  
 The solid pow'r of understanding fails;  
 Where beams of warm imagination play,  
 The memory's soft figures melt away.  
 One science only will one genius fit;  
 So vast is art, so narrow human wit:  
 Not only bounded to peculiar arts,  
 But oft in those confin'd to single parts.

Like kings we lose the conquests gain'd before,  
 By vain ambition still to make them more;  
 Each might his sev'ral province well command,  
 Would all but stoop to what they understand.

First follow Nature, and your judgment frame  
 By her just standard, which is still the same:  
 Unerring NATURE, still divinely bright,  
 One clear, unchang'd, and universal light,  
 Life, force, and beauty, must to all impart,  
 At once the source, and end, and test of Art.  
 Art from that fund each just supply provides,  
 Works without show, and without pomp presides:  
 In some fair body thus th' informing soul  
 With spirits feeds, with vigour fills the whole,  
 Each motion guides, and ev'ry nerve sustains;  
 Itself unseen, but in th' effects, remains.  
 Some, to whom Heav'n in wit has been profuse,  
 Want as much more, to turn it to its use;  
 For wit and judgment often are at strife,  
 Tho' meant each other's aid, like man and wife.  
 'Tis more to guide, than spur the Muse's steed;  
 Restrain his fury, than provoke his speed;  
 The winged courser, like a gen'rous horse,  
 Shows most true mettle when you check his course.

Those RULES of old discovered, not devis'd,  
 Are Nature still, but Nature methodiz'd;  
 Nature, like liberty, is but restrain'd  
 By the same laws which first herself ordain'd.

Hear how learn'd Greece her useful rules indites,  
 When to repress, and when indulge our flights:  
 High on Parnassus' top her sons she show'd,  
 And pointed out those arduous paths they trod;  
 Held from afar, aloft, th' immortal prize,  
 And urg'd the rest by equal steps to rise.

Just precepts thus from great examples giv'n,  
 She drew from them what they deriv'd from Heav'n.  
 The gen'rous Critic fann'd the Poet's fire,  
 And taught the world with reason to admire.  
 Then Criticism the Muses handmaid prov'd,  
 To dress her charms, and make her more belov'd:  
 But following wits from that intention stray'd,  
 Who could not win the mistress, woo'd the maid;  
 Against the Poets their own arms they turn'd,  
 Sure to hate most the men from whom they learn'd.  
 So modern 'Pothecaries, taught the art  
 By Doctor's bills to play the Doctor's part,  
 Bold in the practice of mistaken rules,  
 Prescribe, apply, and call their masters fools.  
 Some on the leaves of ancient authors prey,  
 Nor time nor moths e'er spoil'd so much as they.  
 Some drily plain, without invention's aid,  
 Write dull receipts how poems may be made.  
 These leave the sense, their learning to display,  
 And those explain the meaning quite away.

You then whose judgment the right course would  
 steer,  
 Know well each ANCIENT's proper character;  
 His fable, subject, scope in ev'ry page;  
 Religion, Country, genius of his Age:  
 Without all these at once before your eyes,  
 Cavil you may, but never criticize.  
 Be Homer's works your study and delight,  
 Read them by day, and meditate by night;  
 Thence form your judgment, thence your maxims  
 bring,  
 And trace the Muses upward to their spring.  
 Still with itself compar'd, his text peruse;  
 And let your comment be the Mantuan Muse.

When first young Maro in his boundless mind  
 A work t' outlast immortal Rome design'd,  
 Perhaps he seem'd above the critic's law,  
 And but from Nature's fountains scorn'd to draw:  
 But when t' examine ev'ry part he came,  
 Nature and Homer were, he found, the same.  
 Convinc'd, amaz'd, he checks the bold design;  
 And rules as strict his labour'd work confine,  
 As if the Stagirite o'erlook'd each line. }  
 Learn hence for ancient rules a just esteem;  
 To copy nature is to copy them.

Some beauties yet no Precepts can declare,  
 For there's a happiness as well as care.  
 Music resembles Poetry, in each }  
 Are nameless graces which no methods teach,  
 And which a master-hand alone can reach. }  
 If, where the rules not far enough extend,  
 (Since rules were made but to promote their end)  
 Some lucky Licence answer to the full  
 Th' intent propos'd, that Licence is a rule.  
 Thus Pegasus, a nearer way to take,  
 May boldly deviate from the common track;  
 From vulgar bounds with brave disorder part,  
 And snatch a grace beyond the reach of art,  
 Which without passing thro' the judgment, gains  
 The heart, and all its end at once attains.  
 In prospects thus, some objects please our eyes, }  
 Which out of nature's common order rise, }  
 The shapeless rock, or hanging precipice. }  
 Great wits sometimes may gloriously offend,  
 And rise to faults true Critics dare not mend.  
 But tho' the Ancients thus their rules invade,  
 (As Kings dispense with laws themselves have made)  
 Moderns, beware! or if you must offend

Against the precept, ne'er transgress its End;  
 Let it be seldom, and compell'd by need;  
 And have, at least, their precedent to plead.  
 The Critic else proceeds without remorse,  
 Seizes your fame, and puts his laws in force.

I know there are, to whose presumptuous thoughts  
 Those freer beauties, ev'n in them, seem faults.  
 Some figures monstrous and mis-shap'd appear,  
 Consider'd singly, or beheld too near,  
 Which, but proportion'd to their light, or place,  
 Due distance reconciles to form and grace.  
 A prudent chief not always must display  
 His pow'rs in equal ranks, and fair array.  
 But with th' occasion and the place comply,  
 Conceal his force, nay seem sometimes to fly.  
 Those oft are stratagems which errors seem,  
 Nor is it Homer nods, but we that dream.

Still green with bays each ancient Altar stands,  
 Above the reach of sacrilegious hands;  
 Secure from Flames, from Envy's fiercer rage,  
 Destructive War, and all-involving Age.  
 See, from each clime the learn'd their incense bring!  
 Hear, in all tongues consenting Pæans ring!  
 In praise so just let ev'ry voice be join'd,  
 And fill the gen'ral chorus of mankind.  
 Hail, Bards triumphant! born in happier days;  
 Immortal heirs of universal praise!

Whose honours with increase of ages grow,  
 As streams roll down, enlarging as they flow;  
 Nations unborn your mighty names shall sound,  
 And world's applaud that must not yet be found!  
 Oh may some spark of your celestial fire,  
 The last, the meanest of your sons inspire,  
 (That on weak wings, from far, pursues your flights;

Glows while he reads, but trembles as he writes)  
To teach vain Wits a science little known,  
T' admire superior sense, and doubt their own!

OF all the Causes which conspire to blind  
Man's erring judgment, and misguide the mind,  
What the weak head with strongest bias rules,  
Is *Pride*, the never-failing vice of fools.  
Whatever nature has in worth denied,  
She gives in large recruits of needful pride;  
For as in bodies, thus in souls, we find  
What wants in blood and spirits, swell'd with wind:  
Pride, where wit fails, steps in to our defence,  
And fills up all the mighty Void of sense.  
If once right reason drives that cloud away,  
Truth breaks upon us with resistless day.  
Trust not yourself; but your defects to know,  
Make use of ev'ry friend—and ev'ry foe.

*A little learning* is a dang'rous thing;  
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring:  
There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,  
And drinking largely sobers us again.  
Fir'd at first sight with what the Muse imparts,  
In fearless youth we tempt the heights of Arts,  
While from the bounded level of our mind  
Short views we take, nor see the lengths behind;  
But more advanc'd, behold with strange surprize  
New distant scenes of endless science rise!  
So pleas'd at first the tow'ring Alps we try,  
Mount o'er the vales, and seem to tread the sky,  
Th' eternal snows appear already past,  
And the first clouds and mountains seem the last;  
But, those attain'd, we tremble to survey  
The growing labours of the lengthen'd way,



Th' increasing prospects tire our wand'ring eyes,  
 Hills peep o'er hills, and Alps on Alps arise!  
 A perfect Judge will read each work of Wit  
 With the same spirit that its author writ:  
 Survey the WHOLE, nor seek slight faults to find  
 Where nature moves, and rapture warms the mind;  
 Nor lose, for that malignant dull delight,  
 The gen'rous pleasure to be charm'd with Wit.  
 But in such lays as neither ebb, nor flow,  
 Correctly cold, and regularly low,  
 That shunning faults, one quiet tenour keep;  
 We cannot blame indeed——but we may sleep.  
 In wit, as nature, what affects our hearts  
 Is not th' exactness of peculiar parts;  
 'Tis not a lip, or eye, we beauty call,  
 But the joint force and full result of all.  
 Thus when we view some well-proportion'd dome,  
 (The world's just wonder, and ev'n thine, O Rome!)  
 No single parts unequally surprize,  
 All comes united to th' admiring eyes;  
 No monstrous height, or breadth, or length appear;  
 The Whole at once is bold, and regular.

Whoever thinks a faultless piece to see,  
 Thinks what ne'er was, nor is, nor e'er shall be.  
 In every work regard the writer's End,  
 Since none can compass more than they intend;  
 And if the means be just, the conduct true,  
 Applause, in spite of trivial faults, is due;  
 As men of breeding, sometimes men of wit,  
 T' avoid great errors, must the less commit:  
 Neglect the rules each verbal Critic lays,  
 For not to know some trifles, is a praise.  
 Most Critics, fond of some subservient art,  
 Still make the Whole depend upon a Part:

They talk of principles, but notions prize,  
And all to one lov'd Folly sacrifice.

Once on a time, La Mancha's Knight, they say,  
A certain bard encount'ring on the way,  
Discours'd in terms as just, with looks as sage,  
As e'er could Dennis of the Grecian stage;  
Concluding all were desp'rate sots and fools,  
Who durst depart from Aristotle's rules.  
Our Author, happy in a judge so nice,  
Produc'd his Play, and begg'd the Knight's advice;  
Made him observe the subject, and the plot,  
The manners, passions, unities; what not?  
All which, exact to rule, were brought about,  
Were but a Combat in the lists left out.  
'What! leave the Combat out?' exclaims the Knight;  
Yes, or we must renounce the Stagirite.  
'Not so by Heav'n' (he answers in a rage)  
'Knights, squires, and steeds, must enter on the  
stage.'

So vast a throng the stage can ne'er contain.  
'Then build a new, or act it in a plain.'

Thus Critics, of less judgment than caprice,  
Curious not knowing, not exact but nice,  
Form short Ideas; and offend in arts  
(As most in manners) by a love to parts.

Some to *Conceit* alone their taste confine,  
And glitt'ring thoughts struck out at ev'ry line;  
Pleas'd with a work where nothing's just or fit;  
One glaring Chaos and wild heap of wit.  
Poets like painters, thus, unskill'd to trace  
The naked nature and the living grace,  
With gold and jewels cover ev'ry part,  
And hide with ornaments their want of art.  
True Wit is Nature to advantage dress'd,

What oft was thought, but ne'er so well express'd;  
 Something, whose truth convinc'd at sight we find,  
 That gives us back the image of our mind.  
 As shades more sweetly recommend the light,  
 So modest plainness sets off sprightly wit.  
 For works may have more wit than does 'em good,  
 As bodies perish thro' excess of blood.

Others for *Language* all their care express,  
 And value books, as women men, for Dress:  
 Their praise is still,—the Style is excellent:  
 The Sense, they humbly take upon content.  
 Words are like leaves; and where they most abound,  
 Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found,  
 False Eloquence, like the prismatic glass,  
 Its gaudy colours spreads on ev'ry place;  
 The face of Nature we no more survey,  
 All glares alike, without distinction gay:  
 But true expression, like th' unchanging Sun,  
 Clears and improves whate'er it shines upon,  
 It gilds all objects, but it alters none. }  
 Expression is the dress of thought, and still  
 Appears more decent, as more suitable;  
 A vile conceit in pompous words express'd,  
 Is like a clown in regal purple dress'd:  
 For diff'rent styles with diff'rent subjects sort,  
 As several garbs with country, town, and court.  
 Some by old words to fame have made pretence,  
 Ancients in phrase, mere moderns in their sense;  
 Such labour'd nothings, in so strange a style,  
 Amaze th' unlearn'd, and make the learned smile.  
 Unlucky, as Fungoso in the play,  
 These sparks with awkward vanity display }  
 What the fine gentleman wore yesterday;  
 And but so mimic ancient wits at best,

As apes our grandsires, in their doublets drest.  
 In words, as fashions, the same rule will hold;  
 Alike fantastic, if too new, or old:  
 Be not the first by whom the new are try'd,  
 Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.

But most by Numbers judge a Poet's song;  
 And smooth or rough, with them is right or wrong:  
 In the bright Muse though thousand charms conspire,  
 Her voice is all these tuneful fools admire;  
 Who haunt Parnassus but to please their ear,  
 Not mend their minds; as some to Church repair,  
 Not for the doctrine, but the music there. }  
 These equal syllables alone require,  
 Tho' oft the ear the open vowels tire;  
 While expletives their feeble aid do join;  
 And ten low words oft creep in one dull line:  
 While they ring round the same unvary'd chimes,  
 With sure returns of still expected rhymes;  
 Where-e'er you find 'the cooling western breeze',  
 In the next line, it 'whispers through the trees':  
 If crystal streams 'with pleasing murmurs creep',  
 The reader's threaten'd (not in vain) with 'sleep':  
 Then, at the last and only couplet fraught  
 With some unmeaning thing they call a thought,  
 A needless Alexandrine ends the song  
 That, like a wounded snake, drags its slow length  
 along.

Leave such to tune their own dull rhymes, and know  
 What's roundly smooth or languishingly slow;  
 And praise the easy vigour of a line,  
 Where Denham's strength, and Waller's sweetness  
 join.

True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,  
 As those move easiest who have learn'd to dance.

'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence,  
 The sound must seem an Echo to the sense:  
 Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows,  
 And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;  
 But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,  
 The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent roar:  
 When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,  
 The line too labours, and the words move slow;  
 Not so, when swift Camilla scours the plain,  
 Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and skims along the  
 main.

Hear how Timotheus' varied lays surprize,  
 And bid alternate passions fall and rise!  
 While, at each change, the son of Libyan Jove  
 Now burns with glory, and then melts with love,  
 Now his fierce eyes with sparkling fury glow,  
 Now sighs steal out, and tears begin to flow:  
 Persians and Greeks like turns of nature found,  
 And the world's victor stood subdu'd by Sound!  
 The pow'r of Music all our hearts allow,  
 And what Timotheus was, is DRYDEN now.

Avoid Extremes; and shun the fault of such,  
 Who still are pleas'd too little or too much.  
 At ev'ry trifle scorn to take offence,  
 That always shows great pride, or little sense;  
 Those heads, as stomachs, are not sure the best,  
 Which nauseate all, and nothing can digest.  
 Yet let not each gay Turn thy rapture move;  
 For fools admire, but men of sense approve:  
 As things seem large which we thro' mists descry,  
 Dulness is ever apt to magnify.

Some foreign writers, some our own despise;  
 The Ancients only, or the Moderns prize.  
 Thus Wit, like Faith, by each man is apply'd

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To one small sect, and all are damn'd beside.  
Meanly they seek the blessing to confine,  
And force that sun but on a part to shine,  
Which not alone the southern wit sublimes,  
But ripens spirits in cold northern climes;  
Which from the first has shone on ages past,  
Enlights the present, and shall warm the last;  
Tho' each may feel increases and decays,  
And see now clearer and now darker days.  
Regard not then if Wit be old or new,  
But blame the false, and value still the true.

Some ne'er advance a Judgment of their own,  
But catch the spreading notion of the Town;  
They reason and conclude by precedent,  
And own stale nonsense which they ne'er invent.  
Some judge of authors' names, not works, and then  
Nor praise nor blame the writings, but the men.  
Of all this servile herd the worst is he  
That in proud dulness joins with Quality.  
A constant Critic at the great man's board.  
To fetch and carry nonsense for my Lord.  
What woful stuff this madrigal would be,  
In some starv'd hackney sonneteer, or me?  
But let a Lord once own the happy lines,  
How the wit brightens! how the style refines!  
Before his sacred name flies ev'ry fault,  
And each exalted stanza teems with thought!

The Vulgar thus through Imitation err;  
As oft the Learn'd by being singular;  
So much they scorn the crowd, that if the throng  
By chance go right, they purposely go wrong;  
So Schismatics the plain believers quit,  
And are but damn'd for having too much wit.  
Some praise at morning what they blame at night;

But always think the last opinion right.  
A Muse by these is like a mistress us'd,  
This hour she's idoliz'd, the next abus'd;  
While their weak heads like towns unfortify'd,  
'Twixt sense and nonsense daily change their side.  
Ask them the cause; they're wiser still, they say;  
And still to-morrow's wiser than to-day.  
We think our fathers fools, so wise we grow,  
Our wiser sons, no doubt, will think us so.  
Once School-divines this zealous isle o'er-spread;  
Who knew most Sentences, was deepest read;  
Faith, Gospel, all, seem'd made to be disputed,  
And none had sense enough to be confuted:  
Scotists and Thomists, now, in peace remain,  
Amidst their kindred cobwebs in Duck-lane.<sup>1</sup>  
If Faith itself has diff'rent dresses worn,  
What wonder modes in Wit should take their turn?  
Oft', leaving what is natural and fit,  
The current folly proves the ready wit;  
And authors think their reputation safe,  
Which lives as long as fools are pleas'd to laugh.  
Some valuing those of their own side or mind,  
Still make themselves the measure of mankind:  
Fondly we think we honour merit then,  
When we but praise ourselves in other men.  
Parties in Wit attend on those of State,  
And public faction doubles private hate.  
Pride, Malice, Folly, against Dryden rose,  
In various shapes of Parsons, Critics, Beaus;  
But sense surviv'd, when merry jests were past;  
For rising merit will buoy up at last.  
Might he return, and bless once more our eyes,

<sup>1</sup>A market for old books, near Smithfield.

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New Blackmores<sup>1</sup> and new Milbourns<sup>2</sup> must arise:  
Nay should great Homer lift his awful head,  
Zoilus again would start up from the dead.  
Envy will merit, as its shade, pursue;  
But like a shadow, proves the substance true;  
For envy'd Wit, like Sol eclips'd, makes known  
Th' opposing body's grossness, not its own,  
When first that sun too pow'rful beams displays,  
It draws up vapours which obscure its rays;  
But ev'n those clouds at last adorn its way.  
Reflect new glories, and augment the day.

Be thou the first true merit to befriend;  
His praise is lost, who stays, till all commend.  
Short is the date, alas, of modern rhymes,  
And 'tis but just to let them live betimes.  
No longer now that golden age appears,  
When Patriarch-wits surviv'd a thousand years:  
Now length of Fame (our second life) is lost,  
And bare threescore is all ev'n that can boast;  
Our sons their fathers' failing language see,  
And such as Chaucer is, shall Dryden be.  
So when the faithful pencil has design'd  
Some bright Idea of the master's mind,  
Where a new world leaps out at his command,  
And ready Nature waits upon his hand;  
When the ripe colours soften and unite,  
And sweetly melt into just shade and light;  
When mellowing years their full perfection give,  
And each bold figure just begins to live,  
The treach'rous colours the fair art betray,  
And all the bright creation fades away!

Unhappy Wit, like most mistaken things,

<sup>1</sup> Sir Richard Blackmore and the Rev. Luke Milbourn, critics of Dryden.



Atones not for that envy which it brings.  
 In youth alone its empty praise we boast,  
 But soon the short-liv'd vanity is lost:  
 Like some fair flow'r the early spring supplies,  
 That gaily blooms, but ev'n in blooming dies.  
 What is this Wit, which must our cares employ?  
 The owner's wife, that other men enjoy;  
 Then most our trouble still when most admir'd,  
 And still the more we give, the more requir'd;  
 Whose fame with pains we guard, but lose with ease,  
 Sure some to vex, but never all to please;  
 'Tis what the vicious fear, the virtuous shun,  
 By fools 'tis hated, and by knaves undone!

If Wit so much from Ign'rance undergo,  
 Ah let not Learning too commence its foe!  
 Of old, those met rewards who could excel,  
 And such were prais'd who but endeavour'd well:  
 Tho' triumphs were to gen'als only due,  
 Crowns were reserv'd to grace the soldiers too.  
 Now, they who reach Parnassus' lofty crown,  
 Employ their pains to spurn some others down;  
 And while self-love each jealous writer rules,  
 Contending wits become the sport of fools:  
 But still the worst with most regret commend,  
 For each ill Author is as bad a Friend.  
 To what base ends, and by what abject ways,  
 Are mortals urg'd thro' sacred lust of praise!  
 Ah ne'er so dire a thirst of glory boast,  
 Nor in the Critic let the Man be lost.  
 Good-nature and good-sense must ever join;  
 To err is human, to forgive, divine.

But if in noble minds some dregs remain  
 Not yet purg'd off, of spleen and sour disdain;  
 Discharge that rage on more provoking crimes,

Nor fear a dearth in these flagitious times.  
No pardon vile Obscenity should find,  
Tho' wit and art conspire to move your mind;  
But Dulness with Obscenity must prove  
As shameful sure as Impotence in love.  
In the fat age of pleasure wealth and ease,  
Sprung the rank weed, and thriv'd with large  
increase:

When love was all an easy Monarch's care;  
Seldom at council, never in a war:  
Jilts rul'd the state, and statesmen farces writ;  
Nay wits had pensions, and young Lords had wit:  
The Fair sate panting at a Courtier's play,  
And not a Mask went unimprov'd away:  
The modest fan was lifted up no more,  
And Virgins smil'd at what they blush'd before.  
The following licence of a Foreign reign  
Did all the dregs of bold Socinus drain;  
Then unbelieving priests reform'd the nation,  
And taught more pleasant methods of salvation;  
Where Heav'n's free subjects might their rights  
dispute,

Lest God himself should seem too absolute:  
Pulpits their sacred satire learn'd to spare,  
And Vice admir'd to find a flatt'rer there!  
Encourag'd thus, Wit's Titans brav'd the skies,  
And the press groan'd with licens'd blasphemies.  
These monsters, Critics! with your darts engage,  
Here point your thunder, and exhaust your rage!  
Yet shun their fault, who, scandalously nice,  
Will needs mistake an author into vice;  
All seems infected that th' infected spy,  
As all looks yellow to the jaundic'd eye.

LEARN then what MORALS Critics ought to show,  
 For 'tis but half a Judge's task, to know.  
 'Tis not enough, taste, judgment, learning, join;  
 In all you speak, let truth and candour shine:  
 That not alone what to your sense is due  
 All may allow; but seek your friendship too.

Be silent always when you doubt your sense;  
 And speak, tho' sure, with seeming diffidence:  
 Some positive, persisting fops we know,  
 Who, if once wrong, will needs be always so;  
 But you, with pleasure own your errors past,  
 And make each day a Critic on the last.

'Tis not enough, your counsel still be true;  
 Blunt truths more mischief than nice falsehoods do;  
 Men must be taught as if you taught them not,  
 And things unknown propos'd as things forgot.  
 Without Good Breeding, truth is disapprov'd;  
 That only makes superior sense belov'd.

Be niggards of advice on no pretence;  
 For the worse avarice is that of sense.  
 With mean complacence ne'er betray your trust,  
 Nor be so civil as to prove unjust.  
 Fear not the anger of the wise to raise;  
 Those best can bear reproof, who merit praise.

'Twere well might critics still this freedom take,  
 But Appius reddens at each word you speak,  
 And stares, tremendous, with a threat'ning eye,<sup>1</sup>  
 Like some fierce Tyrant in old tapestry.  
 Fear most to tax an Honourable fool,  
 Whose right it is, uncensur'd, to be dull;  
 Such, without wit, are Poets when they please,  
 As without learning they can take Degrees.  
 Leave dang'rous truths to unsuccessful Satires,

<sup>1</sup>John Dennis, described by Pope as 'a furious old critic'.

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And flattery to fulsome Dedicators,  
Whom, when they praise, the world believes no more,  
Than when they promise to give scribbling o'er.  
'Tis best sometimes your censure to restrain,  
And charitably let the dull be vain:  
Your silence there is better than your spite,  
For who can rail so long as they can write?  
Still humming on, their drowsy course they keep,  
And lash'd so long, like tops, are lash'd asleep.  
False steps but help them to renew the race,  
As, after stumbling, Jades will mend their pace.  
What crowds of these, impenitently bold,  
In sounds and jingling syllables grown old,  
Still run on Poets, in a raging vein,  
Ev'n to the dregs and squeezings of the brain,  
Strain out the last dull droppings of their sense,  
And rhyme with all the rage of Impotence.

Such shameless Bards we have; and yet 'tis true,  
There are as mad abandon'd Critics too.  
The bookful blockhead, ignorantly read,  
With loads of learned lumber in his head,  
With his own tongue still edifies his ears,  
And always list'ning to himself appears.  
All books he reads, and all he reads assails,  
From Dryden's Fables down to Durfey's Tales.  
With him, most authors steal their works, or buy;  
Garth did not write his own Dispensary.  
Name a new Play, and he's the Poet's friend,  
Nay show'd his faults—but when would Poets mend?  
No place so sacred from such fops is barr'd,  
Nor is Paul's church more safe than Paul's  
    churchyard:  
Nay, fly to Altars; there they'll talk you dead:  
For Fools rush in where Angels fear to tread.

Distrustful sense with modest caution speaks,  
 It still looks home, and short excursions makes;  
 But rattling nonsense in full volleys breaks,  
 And never shock'd, and never turn'd aside,  
 Bursts out, resistless, with a thund'ring tide.

But where's the man, who counsel can bestow,  
 Still pleas'd to teach, and yet not proud to know?  
 Unbiass'd, or by favour, or by spite;  
 Not dully prepossess'd, nor blindly right;  
 Tho' learn'd, well-bred; and tho' well-bred, sincere,  
 Modestly bold, and humanly severe:  
 Who to a friend his faults can freely show,  
 And gladly praise the merit of a foe?  
 Blest with a taste exact, yet unconfin'd;  
 A knowledge both of books and human kind:  
 Gen'rous converse; a soul exempt from pride;  
 And love to praise, with reason on his side?

Such once were Critics; such the happy few,  
 Athens and Rome in better ages knew.  
 The mighty Stagirite first left the shore,  
 Spread all his sails, and durst the deeps explore:  
 He steer'd securely, and discover'd far,  
 Led by the light of the Mæonian Star.  
 Poets, a race long unconfin'd, and free,  
 Still fond and proud of savage liberty,  
 Receiv'd his laws; and stood convinc'd 'twas fit,  
 Who conquer'd Nature, should preside o'er Wit.

Horace still charms with graceful negligence,  
 And without method talks us into sense,  
 Will, like a friend, familiarly convey  
 The truest notions in the easiest way.  
 He, who supreme in judgment, as in wit,  
 Might boldly censure, as he boldly writ,  
 Yet judg'd with coolness, tho' he sung with fire;

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His Precepts teach but what his works inspire.  
Our Critics take a contrary extreme,  
They judge with fury, but they write with fle'me:  
Nor suffers Horace more in wrong Translations  
By Wits, than Critics in as wrong Quotations.

See Dionysius Homer's thoughts refine,  
And call new beauties forth from ev'ry line!  
Fancy and art in gay Petronius please,  
The scholar's learning, with the courtier's ease.

In grave Quintilian's copious work, we find  
The justest rules, and clearest method join'd:  
Thus useful arms in magazines we place,  
All rang'd in order, and dispos'd with grace,  
But less to please the eye, than arm the hand,  
Still fit for use, and ready at command.

Thee, bold Longinus! all the Nine inspire,  
And bless their Critic with a Poet's fire.  
An ardent Judge, who zealous in his trust,  
With warmth gives sentence, yet is always just;  
Whose own example strengthens all his laws;  
And is himself that great Sublime he draws.

Thus long succeeding Critics justly reign'd,  
Licence repress'd, and useful laws ordain'd.  
Learning and Rome alike in empire grew;  
And Arts still follow'd where her Eagles flew;  
From the same foes, at last, both felt their doom,  
And the same age saw Learning fall, and Rome.  
With Tyranny, then Superstition join'd,  
As that the body, this enslav'd the mind;  
Much was believ'd, but little understood,  
And to be dull was constru'd to be good;  
A second deluge Learning thus o'er-run,  
And the Monks finish'd what the Goths begun.

At length Erasmus, that great injur'd name,

(The glory of the Priesthood, and the shame!)  
 Stemm'd the wild torrent of a barb'rous age,  
 And drove those holy Vandals off the stage.

But see! each Muse, in LEO's golden days,<sup>1</sup>  
 Starts from her trance, and trims her wither'd bays,  
 Rome's ancient Genius, o'er its ruins spread,  
 Shakes off the dust, and rears his rev'rend head.  
 Then Sculpture and her sister-arts revive;  
 Stones leap'd to form, and rocks began to live;  
 With sweeter notes each rising Temple rung,  
 A Raphael painted, and a Vida sung.  
 Immortal Vida: on whose honour'd brow  
 The Poet's bays and Critic's ivy grow:  
 Cremona now shall ever boast thy name,  
 As next in place to Mantua, next in fame!

But soon by impious arms from Latium chas'd,  
 Their ancient bounds the banish'd Muses pass'd;  
 Thence Arts o'er all the northern world advance,  
 But Critic-learning flourish'd most in France:  
 The rules a nation, born to serve, obeys;  
 And Boileau still in right of Horace sways.  
 But we, brave Britons, foreign laws despis'd,  
 And kept unconquer'd, and unciviliz'd;  
 Fierce for the liberties of wit, and bold,  
 We still defy'd the Romans, as of old.  
 Yet some there were, among the sounder few  
 Of those who less presum'd, and better knew,  
 Who durst assert the juster ancient cause,  
 And here restor'd Wit's fundamental laws.  
 Such was the Muse, whose rules and practice tell,<sup>2</sup>  
 'Nature's chief Master-piece is writing well'.

<sup>1</sup>Leo X, whose papacy lasted from 1513 to 1521: the patron of Raphael.

<sup>2</sup>The reference is to an *Essay on Poetry* by the Duke of Buckingham.

Such was Roscommon,<sup>1</sup> not more learn'd than good,  
With manners gen'rous as his noble blood;  
To him the wit of Greece and Rome was known,  
And ev'ry author's merit, but his own.  
Such late was Walsh<sup>2</sup>—the Muse's judge and friend,  
Who justly knew to blame or to commend;  
To failings mild, but zealous for desert;  
The clearest head, and the sincerest heart.  
This humble praise, lamented shade! receive,  
This praise at least a grateful Muse may give:  
The Muse, whose early voice you taught to sing,  
Prescrib'd her heights, and prun'd her tender wing,  
(Her guide now lost) no more attempts to rise,  
But in low numbers short excursions tries:  
Content, if hence th' unlearn'd their wants may view,  
The learn'd reflect on what before they knew:  
Careless of censure, nor too fond of fame;  
Still pleas'd to praise, yet not afraid to blame,  
Averse alike to flatter, or offend;  
Not free from faults, nor yet too vain to mend.

<sup>1</sup>The Earl of Roscommon, who cultivated a chaste muse at the court of Charles II.

<sup>2</sup>Warton observes that this description of Pope's early admirer, 'knowing Walsh', 'must be attributed to friendship, rather than to judgement'.



# THE RAPE OF THE LOCK

## AN HEROI-COMICAL POEM

Nolueram, Belinda, tuos violare capillos;  
Sed juvat, hoc precibus me tribuisse tuis.

MART. [*Epigr.* XII, 84.]

TO

MRS. ARABELLA FERMOR

### CANTO I

WHAT dire offence from am'rous causes springs,  
What mighty contests rise from trivial things,  
I sing—This verse to CARYL,<sup>1</sup> Muse! is due:  
This, ev'n Belinda may vouchsafe to view:  
Slight is the subject, but not so the praise,  
If She inspire, and He approve my lays

Say what strange motive, Goddess! could compel  
A well-bred Lord t' assault a gentle Belle?  
O say what stranger cause, yet unexplor'd,  
Could make a gentle Belle reject a Lord?  
In tasks so bold, can little men engage,  
And in soft bosoms dwells such mighty Rage?

Sol thro' white curtains shot a tim'rous ray,  
And oped those eyes that must eclipse the day:  
Now lap-dogs give themselves the rousing shake,  
And sleepless lovers, just at twelve, awake:  
Thrice rung the bell, the slipper knock'd the ground,  
And the press'd watch return'd a silver sound.  
Belinda still her downy pillow prest,  
Her guardian SYLPH prolong'd the balmy rest:  
'Twas He had summon'd to her silent bed

<sup>1</sup>John Caryll, member of an ancient Catholic family and a close friend of the poet.

The morning-dream that hover'd o'er her head;  
A Youth more glitt'ring than a Birth-night Beau,  
(That ev'n in slumber caus'd her cheek to glow)  
Seem'd to her ear his winning lips to lay,  
And thus in whispers said, or seem'd to say.

Fairest of mortals, thou distinguish'd care  
Of thousand bright Inhabitants of Air!  
If e'er one vision touch'd thy infant thought,  
Of all the Nurse and all the Priest have taught;  
Of airy Elves by moonlight shadows seen,  
The silver token, and the circled green,  
Or virgins visited by Angel-pow'rs,  
With golden crowns and wreaths of heav'nly flow'rs;  
Hear and believe! thy own importance know,  
Nor bound thy narrow views to things below.  
Some secret truths, from learned pride conceal'd,  
To Maids alone and Children are reveal'd:  
What tho' no credit doubting Wits may give?  
The Fair and Innocent shall still believe.  
Know, then, unnumber'd Spirits round thee fly,  
The light Militia of the lower sky:  
These, tho' unseen, are ever on the wing,  
Hang o'er the Box, and hover round the Ring.  
Think what an equipage thou hast in Air,  
And view with scorn two Pages and a Chair.  
As now your own, our beings were of old,  
And once inclos'd in Woman's beauteous mould;  
Thence, by a soft transition, we repair  
From earthly Vehicles to these of air.  
Think not, when Woman's transient breath is fled,  
That all her vanities at once are dead;  
Succeeding vanities she still regards,  
And tho' she plays no more, o'erlooks the cards.  
Her joy in gilded Chariots, when alive,

And love of Ombre, after death survive.<sup>1</sup>  
 For when the Fair in all their pride expire,  
 To their first Elements their Souls retire:  
 The Sprites of fiery Termagants in Flame  
 Mount up, and take a Salamander's name.  
 Soft yielding minds to Water glide away,  
 And sip, with Nymphs, their elemental Tea.  
 The graver Prude sinks downward to a Gnome,  
 In search of mischief still on Earth to roam.  
 The light Coquettes in Sylphs aloft repair,  
 And sport and flutter in the fields of Air.

Know further yet; whoever fair and chaste  
 Rejects mankind, is by some Sylph embrac'd:  
 For Spirits, freed from mortal laws, with ease  
 Assume what sexes and what shapes they please.  
 What guards the purity of melting Maids,  
 In courtly balls, and midnight masquerades,  
 Safe from the treach'rous friend, the daring spark,  
 The glance by day, the whisper in the dark,  
 When kind occasion prompts their warm desires,  
 When music softens, and when dancing fires?  
 'Tis but their Sylph, the wise Celestials know,  
 Tho' Honour is the word with Men below.

Some nymphs there are, too conscious of their face,  
 For life predestin'd to the Gnomes' embrace.  
 These swell their prospects and exalt their pride,  
 When offers are disdain'd, and love deny'd:  
 Then gay Ideas crowd the vacant brain,  
 While Peers, and Dukes, and all their sweeping train,  
 And Garters, Stars, and Coronets appear,  
 And in soft sounds, Your Grace salutes their ear.  
 'Tis these that early taint the female soul,

<sup>1</sup>Ombre was a favourite feminine card-game in the reign of Queen Anne: while male gamblers preferred Piquet.

Instruct the eyes of young Coquettes to roll,  
Teach Infant-cheeks a bidden blush to know,  
And little hearts to flutter at a Beau.

Oft, when the world imagine women stray,  
The Sylphs thro' mystic mazes guide their way,  
Thro' all the giddy circle they pursue,  
And old impertinence expel by new.  
What tender maid but must a victim fall  
To one man's treat, but for another's ball?  
When Florio speaks what virgin could withstand,  
If gentle Damon did not squeeze her hand?  
With varying vanities, from ev'ry part,  
They shift the moving Toyshop of their heart;  
Where wigs with wigs, with sword-knots sword-knots  
strive,

Beaux banish beaux, and coaches coaches drive.  
This erring mortals Levity may call;  
Oh blind to truth! the Sylphs contrive it all.

Of these am I, who thy protection claim,  
A watchful sprite, and Ariel is my name.  
Late, as I rang'd the crystal wilds of air,  
In the clear Mirror of thy ruling Star  
I saw, alas! some dread event impend,  
Ere to the main this morning sun descend,  
But heav'n reveals not what, or how, or where:  
Warn'd by the Sylph, or pious maid, beware!  
This to disclose is all thy guardian can:  
Beware of all, but most beware of Man!

He said; when Shock, who thought she slept too  
long,  
Leap'd up, and wak'd his mistress with his tongue.  
'Twas then, Belinda, if report say true,  
Thy eyes first open'd on a Billet-doux;  
Wounds, Charms, and Ardors were no sooner read,

But all the Vision vanish'd from thy head.  
 And now, unveil'd, the Toilet stands display'd,  
 Each silver Vase in mystic order laid.  
 First, rob'd in white, the Nymph intent adores,  
 With head uncover'd, the Cosmetic pow'rs.  
 A heav'nly image in the glass appears,  
 To that she bends, to that her eyes she rears;  
 Th' inferior Priestess, at her altar's side,  
 Trembling begins the sacred rites of Pride.  
 Unnumber'd treasures ope at once, and here  
 The various off'rings of the world appear;  
 From each she nicely culls with curious toil,  
 And decks the Goddess with the glitt'ring spoil.  
 This casket India's glowing gems unlocks,  
 And all Arabia breathes from yonder box.  
 The Tortoise here and Elephant unite,  
 Transform'd to combs, the speckled, and the white.  
 Here files of pins extend their shining rows,  
 Puffs, Powders, Patches, Bibles, Billet-doux.  
 Now awful Beauty puts on all its arms;  
 The fair each moment rises in her charms,  
 Repairs her smiles, awakens ev'ry grace,  
 And calls forth all the wonders of her face;  
 Sees by degrees a purer blush arise,  
 And keener lightnings quicken in her eyes.  
 The busy Sylphs surround their darling care,  
 These set the head, and those divide the hair,  
 Some fold the sleeve, whilst others plait the gown;  
 And Betty's prais'd for labours not her own.

## CANTO II

NOT with more glories, in th' etherial plain,  
 The Sun first rises o'er the purpled main,  
 Than, issuing forth, the rival of his beams

---

Launch'd on the bosom of the silver Thames.  
Fair Nymphs, and well-drest Youths around her  
shone,

But ev'ry eye was fix'd on her alone.  
On her white breast a sparkling Cross she wore,  
Which Jews might kiss, and Infidels adore.  
Her lively looks a sprightly mind disclose,  
Quick as her eyes, and as unfix'd as those:  
Favours to none, to all she smiles extends;  
Oft she rejects, but never once offends.  
Bright as the sun, her eyes the gazers strike,  
And, like the sun, they shine on all alike.  
Yet graceful ease, and sweetness void of pride,  
Might hide her faults, if Belles had faults to hide:  
If to her share some female errors fall,  
Look on her face, and you'll forget 'em all.

This Nymph, to the destruction of mankind,  
Nourish'd two Locks, which graceful hung behind  
In equal curls, and well conspir'd to deck  
With shining ringlets the smooth iv'ry neck.  
Love in these labyrinths his slaves detains,  
And mighty hearts are held in slender chains.  
With hairy springes we the birds betray,  
Slight lines of hair surprise the finny prey,  
Fair tresses man's imperial race ensnare,  
And beauty draws us with a single hair.

Th' advent'rous Baron the bright locks admir'd;  
He saw, he wish'd, and to the prize aspir'd.  
Resolv'd to win, he meditates the way,  
By force to ravish, or by fraud betray;  
For when success a Lover's toil attends,  
Few ask, if fraud or force attain'd his ends.

For this, ere Phœbus rose, he had implor'd  
Propitious heav'n, and ev'ry pow'r ador'd,

But chiefly Love—to Love an Altar built,  
Of twelve vast French Romances, neatly gilt.  
There lay three garters, half a pair of gloves;  
And all the trophies of his former loves;  
With tender Billet-doux he lights the pyre,  
And breathes three am'rous sighs to raise the fire.  
Then prostrate falls, and begs with ardent eyes  
Soon to obtain, and long possess the prize:  
The pow'rs gave ear, and granted half his pray'r,  
The rest, the winds dispers'd in empty air.

But now secure the painted vessel glides,  
The sun-beams trembling on the floating tides:  
While melting music steals upon the sky,  
And soften'd sounds along the waters die;  
Smooth flow the waves, the Zephyrs gently play,  
Belinda smil'd, and all the world was gay.  
All but the Sylph—with careful thoughts opprest,  
Th' impending woe sat heavy on his breast.  
He summons strait his Denizens of air;  
The lucid squadrons round the sails repair:  
Soft o'er the shrouds aërial whispers breathe,  
That seem'd but Zephyrs to the train beneath.  
Some to the sun their insect-wings unfold,  
Waft on the breeze, or sink in clouds of gold;  
Transparent forms, too fine for mortal sight,  
Their fluid bodies half dissolv'd in light,  
Loose to the wind their airy garments flew,  
Thin glitt'ring textures of the filmy dew,  
Dipt in the richest tincture of the skies,  
Where light disports in ever-mingling dyes,  
While ev'ry beam new transient colours flings,  
Colours that change whene'er they wave their wings.  
Amid the circle, on the gilded mast,  
Superior by the head, was Ariel plac'd;

---

His purple pinions op'ning to the sun,  
He rais'd his azure wand, and thus begun.

Ye Sylphs and Sylphids, to your chief give ear!  
Fays, Fairies, Genii, Elves, and Dæmons, hear!  
Ye know the spheres and various tasks assign'd  
By laws eternal to th' aerial kind.

Some in the fields of purest Æther play,  
And bask and whiten in the blaze of day.  
Some guide the course of wand'ring orbs on high,  
Or roll the planets thro' the boundless sky.  
Some less refin'd, beneath the moon's pale light  
Pursue the stars that shoot athwart the night,  
Or suck the mists in grosser air below,  
Or dip their pinions in the painted bow,  
Or brew fierce tempests on the wintry main,  
Or o'er the glebe distil the kindly rain.  
Others on earth o'er human race preside,  
Watch all their ways, and all their actions guide:  
Of these the chief the care of Nations own,  
And guard with Arms divine the British Throne.

Our humbler province is to tend the Fair,  
Not a less pleasing, tho' less glorious care;  
To save the powder from too rude a gale,  
Nor let th' imprison'd essences exhale;  
To draw fresh colours from the vernal flow'rs;  
To steal from rainbows e'er they drop in show'rs  
A brighter wash; to curl their waving hairs,  
Assist their blushes, and inspire their airs;  
Nay oft, in dreams, invention we bestow,  
To change a Flounce, or add a Furbelow.

This day, black Omens threat the brightest Fair,  
That e'er deserv'd a watchful spirit's care;  
Some dire disaster, or by force, or slight;  
But what, or where, the fates have wrapt in night.



Whether the nymph shall break Diana's law,  
 Or some frail China jar receive a flaw;  
 Or stain her honour or her new brocade;  
 Forget her pray'rs, or miss a masquerade;  
 Or lose her heart, or necklace, at a ball;  
 Or whether Heav'n has doom'd that Shock must fall.  
 Haste, then, ye spirits! to your charge repair:  
 The flutt'ring fan be Zephyretta's care;  
 The drops to thee, Brillante, we consign;  
 And, Momentilla, let the watch be thine;  
 Do thou, Crispissa, tend her fav'rite Lock;  
 Ariel himself shall be the guard of Shock.

To fifty chosen Sylphs, of special note,  
 We trust th' important charge, the Petticoat:  
 Oft have we known that seven-fold fence to fail,  
 Tho' stiff with hoops, and arm'd with ribs of whale;  
 Form a strong line about the silver bound,  
 And guard the wide circumference around.

Whatever spirit, careless of his charge,  
 His post neglects, or leaves the fair at large,  
 Shall feel sharp vengeance soon o'ertake his sins,  
 Be stopp'd in vials, or transfix'd with pins;  
 Or plung'd in lakes of bitter washes lie,  
 Or wedg'd whole ages in a bodkin's eye:  
 Gums and Pomatums shall his flight restrain,  
 While clogg'd he beats his silken wings in vain;  
 Or Alum styptics with contracting pow'r  
 Shrink his thin essence like a rivel'd flow'r:  
 Or, as Ixion fix'd, the wretch shall feel  
 The giddy motion of the whirling Mill,  
 In fumes of burning Chocolate shall glow,  
 And tremble at the sea that froths below!

He spoke; the spirits from the sails descend;  
 Some, orb in orb, around the nymph extend;

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Some thrid the mazy ringlets of her hair;  
Some hang upon the pendants of her ear:  
With beating hearts the dire event they wait,  
Anxious, and trembling for the birth of Fate.

## CANTO III

CLOSE by those meads, for ever crown'd with flow'rs,  
Where Thames with pride surveys his rising tow'rs,  
There stands a structure of majestic frame,  
Which from the neighb'ring Hampton takes its name.  
Here Britain's statesmen oft the fall foredoom  
Of foreign Tyrants and of Nymphs at home;  
Here thou, great ANNA! whom three realms obey,  
Dost sometimes counsel take—and sometimes Tea.

Hither the heroes and the nymphs resort,  
To taste awhile the pleasures of a Court;  
In various talk th' instructive hours they past,  
Who gave the ball, or paid the visit last;  
One speaks the glory of the British Queen,  
And one describes a charming Indian screen;  
A third interprets motions, looks, and eyes;  
At ev'ry word a reputation dies.  
Snuff, or the fan, supply each pause of chat,  
With singing, laughing, ogling, *and all that*.

Mean while, declining from the noon of day,  
The sun obliquely shoots his burning ray;  
The hungry Judges soon the sentence sign,  
And wretches hang that jury-men may dine,  
The merchant from th' Exchange returns in peace,  
And the long labours of the Toilet cease.  
Belinda now, whom thirst of fame invites,  
Burns to encounter two advent'rous Knights,  
At Ombre singly to decide their doom;  
And swells her breast with conquests yet to come.

Straight the three bands prepare in arms to join,  
 Each band the number of the sacred nine.  
 Soon as she spreads her hand, th' aërial guard  
 Descend, and sit on each important card:  
 First Ariel perch'd upon a Matadore,  
 Then each, according to the rank they bore;  
 For Sylphs, yet mindful of their ancient race,  
 Are, as when women, wondrous fond of place.

Behold, four Kings in majesty rever'd,  
 With hoary whiskers and a forky beard;  
 And four fair Queens whose hands sustain a flow'r,  
 Th' expressive emblem of their softer pow'r;  
 Four Knaves in garbs succinct, a trusty band,  
 Caps on their heads, and halberts in their hand;  
 And particolour'd troops, a shining train,  
 Draw forth to combat on the velvet plain.

The skilful Nymph reviews her force with care:  
 Let Spades be trumps! she said, and trumps they were.

Now move to war her sable Matadors,  
 In show like leaders of the swarthy Moors.  
 Spadillio first, unconquerable Lord!  
 Led off two captive trumps, and swept the board.  
 As many more Manillio forc'd to yield,  
 And march'd a victor from the verdant field.  
 Him Basto follow'd, but his fate more hard  
 Gain'd but one trump and one Plebeian card.  
 With his broad sabre next, a chief in years,  
 The hoary Majesty of Spades appears,  
 Puts forth one manly leg, to sight reveal'd,  
 The rest, his many-colour'd robe conceal'd.  
 The rebel Knave, who dares his prince engage,  
 Proves the just victim of his royal rage.  
 Ev'n mighty Pam, that Kings and Queens o'erthrew  
 And mow'd down armies in the fights of Lu,

---

Sad chance of war! now destitute of aid,  
Falls undistinguish'd by the victor spade!

Thus far both armies to Belinda yield;  
Now to the Baron fate inclines the field.  
His warlike Amazon her host invades,  
Th' imperial consort of the crown of Spades.  
The Club's black Tyrant first her victim dy'd,  
Spite of his haughty mien, and barb'rous pride:  
What boots the regal circle on his head,  
His giant limbs, in state unviably spread;  
That long behind he trails his pompous robe,  
And, of all monarchs, only grasps the globe?

The Baron now his Diamonds pours apace;  
Th' embroider'd King who shows but half his face,  
And his refulgent Queen, with pow'rs combin'd  
Of broken troops an easy conquest find.  
Clubs, Diamonds, Hearts, in wild disorder seen,  
With throngs promiscuous strow the level green.  
Thus when dispers'd a routed army runs,  
Of Asia's troops, and Afric's sable sons,  
With like confusion different nations fly,  
Of various habit, and of various dye,  
The pierc'd battalions dis-united fall,  
In heaps on heaps; one fate o'erwhelms them all.

The Knave of Diamonds tries his wily arts,  
And wins (oh shameful chance!) the Queen of Hearts.  
At this, the blood the virgin's cheek forsook,  
A livid paleness spreads o'er all her look;  
She sees, and trembles at th' approaching ill,  
Just in the jaws of ruin, and Codille.  
And now (as oft as in some distemper'd State)  
On one nice Trick depends the gen'ral fate.  
An Ace of Hearts steps forth: The King unseen  
Lurk'd in her hand, and mourn'd his captive Queen:

He springs to Vengeance with an eager pace,  
 And falls like thunder on the prostrate Ace.  
 The nymph exulting fills with shouts the sky;  
 The walls, the woods, and long canals reply.

Oh thoughtless mortals! ever blind to fate,  
 Too soon dejected, and too soon elate.  
 Sudden, these honours shall be snatch'd away,  
 And curs'd for ever this victorious day.

For lo! the board with cups and spoons is crown'd,  
 The berries crackle, and the mill turns round;  
 On shining Altars of Japan they raise  
 The silver lamp; the fiery spirits blaze:  
 From silver spouts the grateful liquors glide,  
 While China's earth receives the smoking tide:  
 At once they gratify their scent and taste,  
 And frequent cups prolong the rich repast.  
 Straight hover round the Fair her airy band;  
 Some, as she sipp'd, the fuming liquor fann'd,  
 Some o'er her lap their careful plumes display'd,  
 Trembling, and conscious of the rich brocade.  
 Coffee (which makes the politician wise,  
 And see thro' all things with his half-shut eyes),  
 Sent up in vapours to the Baron's brain  
 New Stratagems, the radiant Lock to gain.  
 Ah cease, rash youth! desist ere 'tis too late,  
 Fear the just Gods, and think of Scylla's Fate!  
 Chang'd to a bird, and sent to flit in air,  
 She dearly pays for Nisus' injur'd hair!

But when to mischief mortals bend their will,  
 How soon they find fit instruments of ill!  
 Just then, Clarissa drew with tempting grace  
 A two-edg'd weapon from her shining case:  
 So Ladies in Romance assist their Knight,  
 Present the spear, and arm him for the fight.

He takes the gift with rev'rence, and extends  
The little engine on his fingers' ends;  
This just behind Belinda's neck he spread,  
As o'er the fragrant steams she bends her head.  
Swift to the Lock a thousand Sprites repair,  
A thousand wings, by turns, blow back the hair;  
And thrice they twitch'd the diamond in her ear;  
Thrice she look'd back, and thrice the foe drew near.  
Just in that instant, anxious Ariel sought  
The close recesses of the Virgin's thought;  
As on the nosegay in her breast reclin'd,  
He watch'd th' Ideas rising in her mind,  
Sudden he view'd, in spite of all her art,  
An earthly Lover lurking at her heart.  
Amaz'd, confus'd, he found his pow'r expir'd,  
Resign'd to fate, and with a sigh retir'd.

The Peer now spreads the glitt'ring Forfex wide,  
T' inclose the Lock; now joins it, to divide.  
Ev'n then, before the fatal engine clos'd,  
A wretched Sylph too fondly interpos'd;  
Fate urg'd the shears, and cut the Sylph in twain,  
(But airy substance soon unites again)  
The meeting points the sacred hair dis sever  
From the fair head, for ever, and for ever!

Then flash'd the living lightning from her eyes,  
And screams of horror rend th' affrighted skies.  
Not louder shrieks to pitying heav'n are cast,  
When husbands, or when lapdogs breathe their last;  
Or when rich China vessels fall'n from high,  
In glitt'ring dust and painted fragments lie!

Let wreaths of triumph now my temples twine,  
(The victor cry'd) the glorious Prize is mine!  
While fish in streams, or birds delight in air,  
Or in a coach and six the British Fair,

As long as Atalantis shall be read,<sup>1</sup>  
 Or the small pillow grace a Lady's bed,  
 While visits shall be paid on solemn days,  
 When num'rous wax-lights in bright order blaze,  
 While nymphs take treats, or assignations give,  
 So long my honour, name, and praise shall live!  
 What Time would spare, from Steel receives its date,  
 And monuments, like men, submit to fate!  
 Steel could the labour of the Gods destroy,  
 And strike to dust th' imperial tow'rs of Troy;  
 Steel could the works of mortal pride confound,  
 And hew triumphal arches to the ground.  
 What wonder then, fair nymph! thy hairs should feel,  
 The conqu'ring force of unresisted steel?

## CANTO IV

BUT anxious cares the pensive nymph oppress'd,  
 And secret passions labour'd in her breast.  
 Not youthful kings in battle seiz'd alive,  
 Not scornful virgins who their charms survive,  
 Not ardent lovers robb'd of all their bliss,  
 Not ancient ladies when refus'd a kiss,  
 Not tyrants fierce that unrepenting die,  
 Not Cynthia when her manteau's pinn'd awry,  
 E'er felt such rage, resentment, and despair,  
 As thou, sad Virgin! for thy ravish'd Hair.

For, that sad moment, when the Sylphs withdrew  
 And Ariel weeping from Belinda flew,  
 Umbriel, a dusky, melancholy sprite,  
 As ever sully'd the fair face of light,  
 Down to the central earth, his proper scene,  
 Repair'd to search the gloomy Cave of Spleen.

<sup>1</sup>Mrs. Manley's *New Atalantis* was a best-selling book of the period, 'full of Court, and Party, scandal', written with a 'loose effeminacy of style and sentiment'.

Swift on his sooty pinions flits the Gnome,  
And in a vapour reach'd the dismal dome.  
No cheerful breeze this sullen region knows,  
The dreaded East is all the wind that blows.  
Here in a grotto, shelter'd close from air,  
And screen'd in shades from day's detested glare,  
She sighs for ever on her pensive bed,  
Pain at her side, and Megrim at her head.

Two handmaids wait the throne: alike in place,  
But diff'ring far in figure and in face.  
Here stood Ill-nature like an ancient maid,  
Her wrinkled form in black and white array'd;  
With store of pray'rs, for mornings, nights, and  
noons,  
Her hand is fill'd; her bosom with lampoons.

There Affectation, with a sickly mien,  
Shows in her cheek the roses of eighteen,  
Practis'd to lisp, and hang the head aside,  
Faints into airs, and languishes with pride,  
On the rich quilt sinks with becoming woe,  
Wrapt in a gown, for sickness, and for show.  
The fair ones feel such maladies as these,  
When each new night-dress gives a new disease.

A constant Vapour o'er the palace flies;  
Strange phantoms rising as the mists arise;  
Dreadful, as hermit's dreams in haunted shades,  
Or bright, as visions of expiring maids.  
Now glaring fiends, and snakes on rolling spires,  
Pale spectres, gaping tombs, and purple fires:  
Now lakes of liquid gold, Elysian scenes,  
And crystal domes, and angels in machines.

Unnumber'd throngs on every side are seen,  
Of bodies chang'd to various forms by Spleen.  
Here living Tea-pots stand, one arm held out,



One bent; the handle this, and that the spout:  
 A Pipkin there, like Homer's Tripod walks;  
 Here sighs a Jar, and there a Goose-pie talks;<sup>1</sup>  
 Men prove with child, as pow'rful fancy works,  
 And maids turn'd bottles, call aloud for corks.

Safe past the Gnome thro' this fantastic band,  
 A branch of healing Spleenwort in his hand.  
 Then thus address'd the pow'r: 'Hail, wayward  
 Queen!

Who rule the sex to fifty from fifteen:  
 Parent of vapours and of female wit,  
 Who give th' hysteric, or poetic fit,  
 On various tempers act by various ways,  
 Make some take physic, others scribble plays;  
 Who cause the proud their visits to delay,  
 And send the godly in a pet to pray.  
 A nymph there is, that all thy pow'r disdains,  
 And thousands more in equal mirth maintains.  
 But oh! if e'er thy Gnome could spoil a grace,  
 Or raise a pimple on a beauteous face,  
 Like Citron-waters matrons cheeks inflame,  
 Or change complexions at a losing game;  
 If e'er with airy horns I planted heads,  
 Or rump'd petticoats, or tumbled beds,  
 Or caus'd suspicion when no soul was rude,  
 Or discompos'd the head-dress of a Prude,  
 Or e'er to costive lap-dog gave disease,  
 Which not the tears of brightest eyes could ease:  
 Hear me, and touch Belinda with chagrin,  
 That single act gives half the world the spleen.'

The Goddess with a discontented air  
 Seems to reject him, tho' she grants his pray'r.

<sup>1</sup>Pope's footnote informs us that he 'alludes to a real fact, a lady of distinction imagined herself in this condition'.

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A wond'rous Bag with both her hands she binds,  
Like that where once Ulysses held the winds;  
There she collects the force of female lungs,  
Sighs, sobs, and passions, and the war of tongues.  
A Vial next she fills with fainting fears,  
Soft sorrows, melting griefs, and flowing tears.  
The Gnome rejoicing bears her gifts away,  
Spreads his black wings, and slowly mounts to day.

Sunk in Thalestris' arms the nymph he found,  
Her eyes dejected and her hair unbound.  
Full o'er their heads the swelling bag he rent,  
And all the Furies issu'd at the vent.  
Belinda burns with more than mortal ire,  
And fierce Thalestris fans the rising fire.  
'O wretched maid!' she spread her hands, and cry'd,  
(While Hampton's echoes, 'Wretched maid!' reply'd)  
'Was it for this you took such constant care  
The bodkin, comb, and essence to prepare?  
For this your locks in paper durance bound,  
For this with tort'ring iron wreath'd around?  
For this with fillets strain'd your tender head,  
And bravely bore the double loads of lead?  
Gods! shall the ravisher display your hair,  
While the Fops envy, and the Ladies stare!  
Honour forbid! at whose unrivall'd shrine  
Ease, pleasure, virtue, all our sex resign.  
Methinks already I your tears survey,  
Already hear the horrid things they say,  
Already see you a degraded toast,  
And all your honour in a whisper lost!  
How shall I, then, your helpless fame defend?  
'Twill then be infamy to seem your friend!  
And shall this prize, th' inestimable prize,  
Expos'd thro' crystal to the gazing eyes,

And heighten'd by the diamond's circling rays,  
 On that rapacious hand for ever blaze?  
 Sooner shall grass in Hyde-park Circus grow,  
 And wits take lodgings in the sound of Bow;  
 Sooner let earth, air, sea, to Chaos fall,  
 Men, monkeys, lap-dogs, parrots, perish all!

She said; then raging to Sir Plume repairs,<sup>1</sup>  
 And bids her Beau demand the precious hairs:  
 (Sir Plume of amber snuff-box justly vain,  
 And the nice conduct of a clouded cane)  
 With earnest eyes, and round unthinking face,  
 He first the snuff-box open'd, then the case,  
 And thus broke out—'My Lord, why, what the devil?  
 'Z—ds! damn the lock! 'fore Gad, you must be civil!  
 'Plague on't! 'tis past a jest—nay prithee, pox!  
 'Give her the hair'—he spoke, and rapp'd his box.

'It grieves me much' (reply'd the Peer again)  
 'Who speaks so well should ever speak in vain.  
 But by this Lock, this sacred Lock I swear,  
 (Which never more shall join its parted hair;  
 Which never more its honours shall renew,  
 Clipp'd from the lovely head where late it grew)  
 That while my nostrils draw the vital air,  
 This hand, which won it, shall for ever wear.'  
 He spoke, and speaking, in proud triumph spread  
 The long-contended honours of her head.

But Umbriel, hateful Gnome! forbears not so;  
 He breaks the Vial whence the sorrows flow.  
 Then see! the nymph in beauteous grief appears,  
 Her eyes half-languishing, half-drown'd in tears;  
 On her heav'd bosom hung her drooping head,

<sup>1</sup>Sir George Brown, who took the affair of the ravished lock more seriously than any of the other participants, and was much exasperated by Pope's portrait.

Which, with a sigh, she rais'd; and thus she said.  
'For ever curs'd be this detested day,  
Which snatch'd my best, my fav'rite curl away!  
Happy! ah ten times happy had I been,  
If Hampton-Court these eyes had never seen!  
Yet am not I the first mistaken maid,  
By love of Courts to num'rous ills betray'd.  
Oh had I rather un-admir'd remain'd  
In some lone isle, or distant Northern land;  
Where the gilt Chariot never marks the way,  
Where none learn Ombre, none e'er taste Bohea!  
There kept my charms conceal'd from mortal eye,  
Like roses, that in deserts bloom and die.  
What mov'd my mind with youthful Lords to roam?  
Oh had I stay'd, and said my pray'rs at home!  
'Twas this, the morning omens seem'd to tell,  
Thrice from my trembling hand the patch-box fell;  
The tott'ring China shook without a wind,  
Nay, Poll sat mute, and Shock was most unkind!  
A Sylph too warn'd me of the threats of fate,  
In mystic visions, now believ'd too late!  
See the poor remnants of these slighted hairs!  
My hands shall rend what ev'n thy rapine spares:  
These in two sable ringlets taught to break,  
Once gave new beauties to the snowy neck;  
The sister-lock now sits uncouth, alone,  
And in its fellow's fate foresees its own;  
Uncurl'd it hangs, the fatal shears demands,  
And tempts once more, thy sacrilegious hands.  
Oh hadst thou, cruel! been content to seize  
Hairs less in sight, or any hairs but these!'

## CANTO V

SHE said: the pitying audience melt in tears.  
But Fate and Jove had stopp'd the Baron's ears.  
In vain Thalestris with reproach assails,  
For who can move when fair Belinda fails?  
Not half so fix'd the Trojan could remain,  
While Anna begg'd and Dido rag'd in vain.  
Then grave Clarissa graceful wav'd her fan;  
Silence ensu'd, and thus the nymph began.

‘Say why are Beauties prais'd and honour'd most,  
The wise man's passion, and the vain man's toast?  
Why deck'd with all that land and sea afford,  
Why Angels call'd, and Angel-like ador'd?  
Why round our coaches croud the white-glov'd Beaux,  
Why bows the side-box from its inmost rows;  
How vain are all these glories, all our pains,  
Unless good sense preserve what beauty gains:  
That men may say, when we the front-box grace:  
“Behold the first in virtue as in face!”  
Oh! if to dance all night, and dress all day,  
Charm'd the small-pox, or chas'd old-age away;  
Who would not scorn what housewife's cares produce,  
Or who would learn one earthly thing of use?  
To patch, nay ogle, might become a Saint,  
Nor could it sure be such a sin to paint.  
But since, alas! frail beauty must decay,  
Curl'd or uncurl'd, since Locks will turn to grey;  
Since painted, or not painted, all shall fade,  
And she who scorns a man, must die a maid;  
What then remains but well our pow'r to use,  
And keep good-humour still whate'er we lose?  
And trust me, dear! good-humour can prevail,  
When airs, and flights, and screams, and scolding fail.  
Beauties in vain their pretty eyes may roll;

Charms strike the sight, but merit wins the soul.'

So spoke the Dame, but no applause ensu'd;  
Belinda frown'd, Thalestris call'd her Prude.  
'To arms, to arms!' the fierce Virago cries,  
And swift as lightning to the combat flies.  
All side in parties, and begin th' attack;  
Fans clap, silks rustle, and tough whalebones crack;  
Heroes' and Heroines' shouts confus'dly rise,  
And bass, and treble voices strike the skies.  
No common weapons in their hands are found,  
Like Gods they fight, nor dread a mortal wound.

So when bold Homer makes the Gods engage,  
And heav'nly breasts with human passions rage;  
'Gainst Pallas, Mars; Latona, Hermes arms;  
And all Olympus rings with loud alarms:  
Jove's thunder roars, heav'n trembles all around,  
Blue Neptune storms, the bellowing deeps resound:  
Earth shakes her nodding tow'rs, the ground gives  
way,

And the pale ghosts start at the flash of day!

Triumphant Umbriel on a sconce's height  
Clapp'd his glad wings, and sate to view the fight:  
Propp'd on their bodkin spears, the Sprites survey  
The growing combat, or assist the fray.

While thro' the press enrag'd Thalestris flies,  
And scatters death around from both her eyes,  
A Beau and Witling perish'd in the throng,  
One died in metaphor, and one in song.  
'O cruel nymph! a living death I bear,'  
Cry'd Dapperwit, and sunk beside his chair.  
A mournful glance Sir Fopling upwards cast,  
'Those eyes are made so killing'—was his last.  
Thus on Mæander's flow'ry margin lies  
Th' expiring Swan, and as he sings he dies.

When bold Sir Plume had drawn Clarissa down,  
 Chloe stepp'd in, and kill'd him with a frown;  
 She smil'd to see the doughty hero slain,  
 But, at her smile, the Beau reviv'd again.

Now Jove suspends his golden scales in air,  
 Weighs the Men's wits against the Lady's hair;  
 The doubtful beam long nods from side to side;  
 At length the wits mount up, the hairs subside.

See, fierce Belinda on the Baron flies,  
 With more than usual lightning in her eyes:  
 Nor fear'd the Chief th' unequal fight to try,  
 Who sought no more than on his foe to die.  
 But this bold Lord with manly strength endu'd,  
 She with one finger and a thumb subdu'd:  
 Just where the breath of life his nostrils drew,  
 A charge of Snuff the wily virgin threw;  
 The Gnomes direct, to ev'ry atom just,  
 The pungent grains of titillating dust.  
 Sudden, with starting tears each eye o'erflows,  
 And the high dome re-echoes to his nose.

Now meet thy fate, incens'd Belinda cry'd,  
 And drew a deadly bodkin from her side.  
 (The same, his ancient personage to deck,  
 Her great great grandsire wore about his neck,  
 In three seal-rings; which after, melted down,  
 Form'd a vast buckle for his widow's gown:  
 Her infant grandame's whistle next it grew,  
 The bells she jingled, and the whistle blew;  
 Then in a bodkin grac'd her mother's hairs,  
 Which long she wore, and now Belinda wears.)

'Boast not my fall' (he cry'd) 'insulting foe!  
 Thou by some other shalt be laid as low,  
 Nor think, to die dejects my lofty mind:  
 All that I dread is leaving you behind!

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Rather than so, ah let me still survive,  
And burn in Cupid's flames—but burn alive.'  
'Restore the Lock!' she cries; and all around  
'Restore the Lock!' the vaulted roofs rebound.  
Not fierce Othello in so loud a strain  
Roar'd for the handkerchief that caus'd his pain.  
But see how oft ambitious aims are cross'd,  
And chiefs contend 'till all the prize is lost!  
The Lock, obtain'd with guilt, and kept with pain,  
In ev'ry place is sought, but sought in vain:  
With such a prize no mortal must be blest,  
So heav'n decrees! with heav'n who can contest?

Some thought it mounted to the Lunar sphere,  
Since all things lost on earth are treasur'd there.  
There Hero's wits are kept in pond'rous vases,  
And beau's in snuff-boxes and tweezer-cases.  
There broken vows and death-bed alms are found,  
And lovers' hearts with ends of riband bound,  
The courtier's promises, and sick man's pray'rs,  
The smiles of harlots, and the tears of heirs,  
Cages for gnats, and chains to yoke a flea,  
Dry'd butterflies, and tomes of casuistry.

But trust the Muse—she saw it upward rise,  
Tho' mark'd by none but quick, poetic eyes:  
(So Rome's great founder to the heav'ns withdrew,  
To Proculus alone confess'd in view)  
A sudden Star, it shot thro' liquid air,  
And drew behind a radiant trail of hair.  
Not Berenice's Locks first rose so bright,  
The heav'ns bespangling with dishevell'd light.  
The Sylphs behold it kindling as it flies,  
And pleas'd pursue its progress thro' the skies.

This the Beau monde shall from the Mall survey,  
And hail with music its propitious ray.



This the blest Lover shall for Venus take,  
And send up vows from Rosamonda's lake.  
This Partridge soon shall view in cloudless skies,<sup>1</sup>  
When next he looks thro' Galileo's eyes;  
And hence th' egregious wizard shall foredoom  
The fate of Louis, and the fall of Rome.

Then cease, bright Nymph! to mourn thy ravish'd  
hair,  
Which adds new glory to the shining sphere!  
Not all the tresses that fair head can boast,  
Shall draw such envy as the Lock you lost.  
For, after all the murders of your eye,  
When, after millions slain, yourself shall die:  
When those fair suns shall set, as set they must,  
And all those tresses shall be laid in dust,  
This Lock, the Muse shall consecrate to fame,  
And 'midst the stars inscribe Belinda's name.

<sup>1</sup>John Partridge, 'a ridiculous Star-gazer', published yearly Almanacks.

ELEGY  
TO THE MEMORY OF AN  
UNFORTUNATE LADY<sup>1</sup>

WHAT beck'ning ghost, along the moon-light shade  
Invites my steps, and points to yonder glade?  
'Tis she!—but why that bleeding bosom gor'd,  
Why dimly gleams the visionary sword?  
Oh ever beauteous, ever friendly! tell,  
Is it, in heav'n, a crime to love too well?  
To bear too tender, or too firm a heart,  
To act a Lover's or a Roman's part?  
Is there no bright reversion in the sky,  
For those who greatly think, or bravely die?

Why bade ye else, ye Pow'rs! her soul aspire  
Above the vulgar flight of low desire?  
Ambition first sprung from your blest abodes;  
The glorious fault of Angels and of Gods;  
Thence to their images on earth it flows,  
And in the breasts of Kings and Heroes glows.  
Most souls, 'tis true, but peep out once an age,  
Dull sullen pris'ners in the body's cage:  
Dim lights of life, that burn a length of years  
Useless, unseen, as lamps in sepulchres;  
Like Eastern Kings a lazy state they keep,  
And close confin'd to their own palace, sleep.

From these perhaps (ere nature bade her die)  
Fate snatch'd her early to the pitying sky.  
As into air the purer spirits flow,  
And sep'rate from their kindred dregs below;

<sup>1</sup> The heroine of this elegy, first published in 1717 but probably written at an earlier date, is thought to have been a Mrs. Weston, whose cause Pope had championed after her separation from her husband. With few poems, however, has the ostensible subject less to do.

So flew the soul to its congenial place,  
Nor left one virtue to redeem her Race.

But thou, false guardian of a charge too good,  
Thou, mean deserter of thy brother's blood!  
See on these ruby lips the trembling breath,  
These cheeks now fading at the blast of death:  
Cold is that breast which warm'd the world before,  
And those love-darting eyes must roll no more.  
Thus, if Eternal justice rules the ball,  
Thus shall your wives, and thus your children fall;  
On all the line a sudden vengeance waits,  
And frequent herses shall besiege your gates.  
There passengers shall stand, and pointing say,  
(While the long fun'erals blacken all the way)  
Lo these were they, whose souls the Furies steel'd,  
And curs'd with hearts unknowing how to yield.  
Thus unlamented pass the proud away,  
The gaze of fools, and pageant of a day!  
So perish all, whose breast ne'er learn'd to glow  
For others good, or melt at others woe.

What can atone (oh ever-injur'd shade!)  
Thy fate unpity'd, and thy rites unpaid?  
No friend's complaint, no kind domestic tear  
Pleas'd thy pale ghost, or grac'd thy mournful bier.  
By foreign hands thy dying eyes were clos'd,  
By foreign hands thy decent limbs compos'd,  
By foreign hands thy humble grave adorn'd,  
By strangers honour'd, and by strangers mourn'd!  
What tho' no friends in sable weeds appear,  
Grieve for an hour, perhaps, then mourn a year,  
And bear about the mockery of woe  
To midnight dances, and the public show?  
What tho' no weeping Loves thy ashes grace,  
Nor polish'd marble emulate thy face?

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What tho' no sacred earth allow thee room,  
Nor hallow'd dirge be mutter'd o'er thy tomb?  
Yet shall thy grave with rising flow'rs be drest,  
And the green turf lie lightly on thy breast:  
There shall the morn her earliest tears bestow,  
There the first roses of the year shall blow;  
While Angels with their silver wings o'ershade  
The ground, now sacred by thy reliques made.

So peaceful rests, without a stone, a name,  
What once had beauty, titles, wealth, and fame.  
How lov'd, how honour'd once, avails thee not,  
To whom related, or by whom begot;  
A heap of dust alone remains of thee,  
'Tis all thou art, and all the proud shall be!

Poets themselves must fall, like those they sung,  
Deaf the prais'd ear, and mute the tuneful tongue.  
Ev'n he, whose soul now melts in mournful lays,  
Shall shortly want the gen'rous tear he pays;  
Then from his closing eyes thy form shall part,  
And the last pang shall tear thee from his heart,  
Life's idle business at one gasp be o'er,  
The Muse forgot, and thou be lov'd no more!

## ELOISA TO ABELARD<sup>1</sup>

IN these deep solitudes and awful cells,  
Where heav'nly-pensive contemplation dwells,  
And ever-musing melancholy reigns;  
What means this tumult in a Vestal's veins?  
Why rove my thoughts beyond this last retreat?  
Why feels my heart its long-forgotten heat?  
Yet, yet I love!—From Abelard it came,  
And Eloïsa yet must kiss the name.

Dear fatal name! rest ever unreveal'd,  
Nor pass these lips in holy silence seal'd:  
Hide it, my heart, within that close disguise,  
Where mix'd with God's, his lov'd Idea lies:  
O write it not my hand—the name appears  
Already written—wash it out, my tears!  
In vain lost Eloïsa weeps and prays,  
Her heart still dictates, and her hand obeys.

Relentless walls! whose darksome round contains  
Repentant sighs, and voluntary pains:  
Ye rugged rocks! which holy knees have worn;  
Ye grotts and caverns shagg'd with horrid thorn!  
Shrines! where their vigils pale-ey'd virgins keep,  
And, pitying saints, whose statues learn to weep!  
Tho' cold like you, unmov'd and silent grown,  
I have not yet forgot myself to stone.  
All is not Heav'n's while Abelard has part,  
Still rebel nature holds out half my heart;  
Nor pray'rs nor fasts its stubborn pulse restrain,  
Nor tears for ages taught to flow in vain.

<sup>1</sup>Pope's Argument, here omitted in the interests of brevity, reminds the reader that 'Abelard and Eloïsa flourished in the twelfth century' and were 'two of the most distinguished Persons of their age in learning and beauty, but for nothing more famous than for their unfortunate passion. After a long course of calamities, they retired each to a several Convent. . . .' From this seclusion, Eloïsa addresses her unforgotten lover.

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Soon as thy letters trembling I unclose,  
That well-known name awakens all my woes.  
Oh name for ever sad! for ever dear!  
Still breath'd in sighs, still usher'd with a tear.  
I tremble too, where'er my own I find,  
Some dire misfortune follows close behind.  
Line after line my gushing eyes o'erflow,  
Led thro' a sad variety of woe:  
Now warm in love, now with'ring in my bloom,  
Lost in a convent's solitary gloom!  
There stern Religion quench'd th' unwilling flame,  
There died the best of passions, Love and Fame.

Yet write, oh write me all, that I may join  
Griefs to thy griefs, and echo sighs to thine.  
Nor foes nor fortune take this pow'r away;  
And is my Abelard less kind than they?  
Tears still are mine, and those I need not spare,  
Love but demands what else were shed in pray'r;  
No happier task these faded eyes pursue;  
To read and weep is all they now can do.

Then share thy pain, allow that sad relief;  
Ah, more than share it, give me all thy grief.  
Heav'n first taught letters for some wretch's aid,  
Some banish'd lover, or some captive maid;  
They live, they speak, they breathe what love inspires,  
Warm from the soul, and faithful to its fires,  
The virgin's wish without her fears impart,  
Excuse the blush, and pour out all the heart,  
Speed the soft intercourse from soul to soul,  
And waft a sigh from Indus to the Pole.

Thou know'st how guiltless first I met thy flame,  
When Love approach'd me under Friendship's name;  
My fancy form'd thee of angelic kind,  
Some emanation of th' all-beauteous Mind.

Those smiling eyes, attemp'ring ev'ry ray,  
Shone sweetly lambent with celestial day.  
Guiltless I gaz'd; heav'n listen'd while you sung;  
And truths divine came mended from that tongue.  
From lips like those what precept fail'd to move?  
Too soon they taught me 'twas no sin to love:  
Back thro' the paths of pleasing sense I ran,  
Nor wish'd an Angel whom I lov'd a Man.  
Dim and remote the joys of saints I see;  
Nor envy them that heav'n I lose for thee.

How oft, when press'd to marriage, have I said,  
Curse on all laws but those which love has made?  
Love, free as air, at sight of human ties,  
Spreads his light wings, and in a moment flies.  
Let wealth, let honour, wait the wedded dame,  
August her deed, and sacred be her fame;  
Before true passion all those views remove,  
Fame, wealth, and honour! what are you to Love?  
The jealous God, when we profane his fires,  
Those restless passions in revenge inspires,  
And bids them make mistaken mortals groan,  
Who seek in love for aught but love alone.  
Should at my feet the world's great master fall,  
Himself, his throne, his world, I'd scorn 'em all:  
Not Cæsar's empress would I deign to prove;  
No, make me mistress to the man I love;  
If there be yet another name more free,  
More fond than mistress, make me that to thee!  
Oh! happy state! when souls each other draw,  
When love is liberty, and nature law:  
All then is full, possessing, and possess'd,  
No craving void left aking in the breast:  
Ev'n thought meets thought, ere from the lips it part,  
And each warm wish springs mutual from the heart.

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This sure is bliss (if bliss on earth there be)  
And once the lot of Abelard and me.

Alas, how chang'd! what sudden horrors rise!  
A naked Lover bound and bleeding lies!  
Where, where was Eloise? her voice, her hand,  
Her poniard, had oppos'd the dire command.  
Barbarian, stay! that bloody stroke restrain;  
The crime was common, common be the pain.  
I can no more; by shame, by rage suppress'd,  
Let tears, and burning blushes speak the rest.

Canst thou forget that sad, that solemn day,  
When victims at yon altar's foot we lay?  
Canst thou forget what tears that moment fell,  
When, warm in youth, I bade the world farewell?  
As with cold lips I kiss'd the sacred veil,  
The shrines all trembled, and the lamps grew pale:  
Heav'n scarce believ'd the Conquest it survey'd,  
And Saints with wonder heard the vows I made.  
Yet then, to those dread altars as I drew,  
Not on the Cross my eyes were fix'd, but you:  
Not grace, or zeal, love only was my call,  
And if I lose thy love, I lose my all.  
Come! with thy looks, thy words, relieve my woe;  
Those still at least are left thee to bestow.  
Still on that breast enamour'd let me lie,  
Still drink delicious poison from thy eye,  
Pant on thy lip, and to thy heart be press'd;  
Give all thou canst—and let me dream the rest.  
Ah no! instruct me other joys to prize,  
With other beauties charm my partial eyes,  
Full in my view set all the bright abode,  
And make my soul quit Abelard for God.

Ah, think at least thy flock deserves thy care,  
Plants of thy hand, and children of thy pray'r.



From the false world in early youth they fled,  
By thee to mountains, wilds, and deserts led.  
You rais'd these hallow'd walls; the desert smil'd,  
And Paradise was open'd in the Wild.  
No weeping orphan saw his father's stores  
Our shrines irradiate, or emblaze the floors;  
No silver saints, by dying misers giv'n,  
Here brib'd the rage of ill-requited heav'n:  
But such plain roofs as Piety could raise,  
And only vocal with the Maker's praise.  
In these lone walls (their days eternal bound)  
These moss-grown domes with spiry turrets crown'd,  
Where awful arches make a noon-day night,  
And the dim windows shed a solemn light;  
Thy eyes diffus'd a reconciling ray,  
And gleams of glory brighten'd all the day.  
But now no face divine contentment wears,  
'Tis all blank sadness, or continual tears.  
See how the force of others pray'rs I try,  
(O pious fraud of am'rous charity!)  
But why should I on others pray'rs depend?  
Come thou, my father, brother, husband, friend!  
Ah let thy handmaid, sister, daughter move,  
And all those tender names in one, thy love!  
The darksome pines that o'er yon rocks reclin'd  
Wave high, and murmur to the hollow wind,  
The wand'ring streams that shine between the hills,  
The grotts that echo to the tinkling rills,  
The dying gales that pant upon the trees,  
The lakes that quiver to the curling breeze;  
No more these scenes my meditation aid,  
Or lull to rest the visionary maid.  
But o'er the twilight groves and dusky caves,  
Long-sounding aisles, and intermingled graves,

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Black Melancholy sits, and round her throws  
A death-like silence, and a dead repose:  
Her gloomy presence saddens all the scene,  
Shades ev'ry flow'r, and darkens ev'ry green,  
Deepens the murmur of the falling floods,  
And breathes a browner horror on the woods.

Yet here for ever, ever must I stay;  
Sad proof how well a lover can obey!  
Death, only death, can break the lasting chain:  
And here, ev'n then, shall my cold dust remain,  
Here all its frailties, all its flames resign,  
And wait till 'tis no sin to mix with thine.

Ah wretch! believ'd the spouse of God in vain,  
Confess'd within the slave of love and man.  
Assist me, heav'n! but whence arose that pray'r?  
Sprung it from piety, or from despair?  
Ev'n here, where frozen chastity retires,  
Love finds an altar for forbidden fires.  
I ought to grieve, but cannot what I ought;  
I mourn the lover, not lament the fault;  
I view my crime, but kindle at the view,  
Repent old pleasures, and solicit new;  
Now turn'd to heav'n, I weep my past offence,  
Now think of thee, and curse my innocence.  
Of all affliction taught a lover yet,  
'Tis sure the hardest science to forget!  
How shall I lose the sin, yet keep the sense,  
And love th' offender, yet detest th' offence?  
How the dear object from the crime remove,  
Or how distinguish penitence from love?  
Unequal task! a passion to resign,  
For hearts so touch'd, so pierc'd, so lost as mine.  
Ere such a soul regains its peaceful state,  
How often must it love, how often hate!

How often hope, despair, resent, regret,  
Conceal, disdain,—do all things but forget.  
But let heav'n seize it, all at once 'tis fir'd;  
Not touch'd, but rapt; not waken'd, but inspir'd!  
Oh come! oh teach me nature to subdue,  
Renounce my love, my life, myself—and you.  
Fill my fond heart with God alone, for he  
Alone can rival, can succeed to thee.

How happy is the blameless Vestal's lot!  
The world forgetting, by the world forgot:  
Eternal sunshine of the spotless mind!  
Each pray'r accepted, and each wish resign'd;  
Labour and rest, that equal periods keep;  
'Obedient slumbers that can wake and weep';  
Desires compos'd, affections ever ev'n;  
Tears that delight, and sighs that waft to heav'n.  
Grace shines around her with serenest beams,  
And whisp'ring Angels prompt her golden dreams.  
For her th' unfading rose of Eden blooms,  
And wings of Seraphs shed divine perfumes,  
For her the Spouse prepares the bridal ring,  
For her white virgins Hymenæals sing,  
To sounds of heav'nly harps she dies away,  
And melts in visions of eternal day.

Far other dreams my erring soul employ,  
Far other raptures, of unholy joy:  
When at the close of each sad, sorrowing day,  
Fancy restores what vengeance snatch'd away,  
Then conscience sleeps, and leaving nature free,  
All my loose soul unbounded springs to thee.  
Oh curst, dear horrors of all-conscious night;  
How glowing guilt exalts the keen delight!  
Provoking Dæmons all restraint remove,  
And stir within me ev'ry source of love.

I hear thee, view thee, gaze o'er all thy charms,  
And round thy phantom glue my clasping arms.  
I wake:—no more I hear, no more I view,  
The phantom flies me, as unkind as you.  
I call aloud; it hears not what I say:  
I stretch my empty arms; it glides away.  
To dream once more I close my willing eyes;  
Ye soft illusions, dear deceits, arise!  
Alas, no more! methinks we wand'ring go  
Thro' dreary wastes, and weep each other's woe,  
Where round some mould'ring tow'r pale ivy creeps,  
And low-brow'd rocks hang nodding o'er the deeps.  
Sudden you mount, you beckon from the skies;  
Clouds interpose, waves roar, and winds arise.  
I shriek, start up, the same sad prospect find,  
And wake to all the griefs I left behind.

For thee the fates, severely kind, ordain  
A cool suspense from pleasure and from pain;  
Thy life a long dead calm of fix'd repose;  
No pulse that riots, and no blood that glows.  
Still as the sea, ere winds were taught to blow,  
Or moving spirit bade the waters flow;  
Soft as the slumbers of a saint forgiv'n,  
And mild as op'ning gleams of promis'd heav'n.

Come, Abelard! for what hast thou to dread?  
The torch of Venus burns not for the dead.  
Nature stands check'd; Religion disapproves;  
Ev'n thou art cold—yet Eloïsa loves.  
Ah hopeless, lasting flames! like those that burn  
To light the dead, and warm th' unfruitful urn.

What scenes appear where'er I turn my view?  
The dear Ideas, where I fly, pursue,  
Rise in the grove, before the altar rise,  
Stain all my soul, and wanton in my eyes.

I waste the Matin lamp in sighs for thee,  
Thy image steals between my God and me,  
Thy voice I seem in ev'ry hymn to hear,  
With ev'ry bead I drop too soft a tear.  
When from the censer clouds of fragrance roll,  
And swelling organs lift the rising soul,  
One thought of thee puts all the pomp to flight,  
Priests, tapers, temples, swim before my sight:  
In seas of flame my plunging soul is drown'd,  
While Altars blaze, and Angels tremble round.

While prostrate here in humble grief I lie,  
Kind, virtuous drops just gath'ring in my eye,  
While praying, trembling, in the dust I roll,  
And dawning grace is op'ning on my soul:  
Come, if thou dar'st, all charming as thou art!  
Oppose thyself to heav'n; dispute my heart;  
Come, with one glance of those deluding eyes  
Blot out each bright Idea of the skies;  
Take back that grace, those sorrows, and those tears;  
Take back my fruitless penitence and pray'rs;  
Snatch me, just mounting, from the blest abode;  
Assist the fiends, and tear me from my God!

No, fly me, fly me, far as Pole from Pole;  
Rise Alps between us! and whole oceans roll!  
Ah, come not, write not, think not once of me,  
Nor share one pang of all I felt for thee.  
Thy oaths I quit, thy memory resign;  
Forget, renounce me, hate whate'er was mine.  
Fair eyes, and tempting looks (which yet I view!)  
Long lov'd, ador'd ideas, all adieu!  
Oh Grace serene! oh virtue heav'nly fair!  
Divine oblivion of low-thoughted care!  
Fresh blooming Hope, gay daughter of the sky!  
And Faith, our early immortality!

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Enter, each mild, each amicable guest;  
Receive, and wrap me in eternal rest!  
See in her cell sad Eloïsa spread,  
Propt on some tomb, a neighbour of the dead.  
In each low wind methinks a Spirit calls,  
And more than Echoes talk along the walls.  
Here, as I watch'd the dying lamps around,  
From yonder shrine I heard a hollow sound.  
'Come, sister, come! (it said, or seem'd to say)  
'Thy place is here, sad sister, come away!  
'Once like thyself, I trembled, wept, and pray'd,  
'Love's victim then, tho' now a sainted maid:  
'But all is calm in this eternal sleep;  
'Here grief forgets to groan, and love to weep,  
'Ev'n superstition loses ev'ry fear:  
'For God, not man, absolves our frailties here.'

I come, I come! prepare your roseate bow'rs,  
Celestial palms, and ever-blooming flow'rs.  
Thither, where sinners may have rest, I go,  
Where flames refin'd in breasts seraphic glow:  
Thou, Abelard! the last sad office pay,  
And smooth my passage to the realms of day;  
See my lips tremble, and my eye-balls roll,  
Suck my last breath, and catch my flying soul!  
Ah no—in sacred vestments may'st thou stand,  
The hallow'd taper trembling in thy hand,  
Present the Cross before my lifted eye,  
Teach me at once, and learn of me to die.  
Ah then, thy once-lov'd Eloïsa see!  
It will be then no crime to gaze on me.  
See from my cheek the transient roses fly!  
See the last sparkle languish in my eye!  
'Till ev'ry motion, pulse, and breath be o'er;  
And ev'n my Abelard be lov'd no more.

O Death all-eloquent! you only prove  
What dust we dote on, when 'tis man we love.

Then too, when fate shall thy fair frame destroy,  
(That cause of all my guilt, and all my joy)  
In trance ecstatic may thy pangs be drown'd,  
Bright clouds descend, and Angels watch thee round,  
From op'ning skies may streaming glories shine,  
And saints embrace thee with a love like mine.

May one kind grave unite each hapless name,  
And graft my love immortal on thy fame!  
Then, ages hence, when all my woes are o'er,  
When this rebellious heart shall beat no more;  
If ever chance two wand'ring lovers brings  
To Paraclete's white walls and silver springs,  
O'er the pale marble shall they join their heads,  
And drink the falling tears each other sheds;  
Then sadly say, with mutual pity mov'd,  
'Oh may we never love as these have lov'd!'  
From the full choir when loud Hosannas rise,  
And swell the pomp of dreadful sacrifice,  
Amid that scene if some relenting eye  
Glance on the stone where our cold relics lie,  
Devotion's self shall steal a thought from heav'n,  
One human tear shall drop and be forgiv'n.  
And sure, if fate some future bard shall join  
In sad similitude of griefs to mine,  
Condemn'd whole years in absence to deplore,  
And image charms he must behold no more;  
Such if there be, who loves so long, so well;  
Let him our sad, our tender story tell;  
The well-sung woes will sooth my pensive ghost;  
He best can paint 'em who shall feel 'em most.

# AN ESSAY ON MAN

TO

H. ST. JOHN LORD BOLINGBROKE

## EPISTLE I

*Of the Nature and State of Man, with respect  
to the UNIVERSE*

AWAKE, my ST. JOHN! leave all meaner things  
To low ambition, and the pride of Kings.  
Let us (since Life can little more supply  
Than just look about us and to die)  
Expatriate free o'er all this scene of Man;  
A mighty maze! but not without a plan;<sup>1</sup>  
A Wild, where weeds and flow'rs promiscuous shoot;  
Or Garden, tempting with forbidden fruit.  
Together let us beat this ample field,  
Try what the open, what the covert yield;  
The latent tracts, the giddy heights, explore  
Of all who blindly creep, or sightless soar;  
Eye Nature's walks, shoot Folly as it flies,  
And catch the Manners living as they rise;  
Laugh where we must, be candid where we can;  
But vindicate the ways of God to Man.

I

Say first, of God above, or Man below,  
What can we reason, but from what we know?  
Of Man, what see we but his station here,  
From which to reason, or to which refer?  
Thro' worlds unnumber'd tho' the God be known,  
'Tis ours to trace him only in our own.  
He, who thro' vast immensity can pierce,  
See worlds on worlds compose one universe,

<sup>1</sup>This line originally read: 'A mighty maze of walks without a plan'.



Observe how system into system runs,  
 What other planets circle other suns,  
 What vary'd Being peoples ev'ry star,  
 May tell why Heav'n has made us as we are.  
 But of this frame the bearings, and the ties,  
 The strong connexions, nice dependencies,  
 Gradations just, has thy pervading soul  
 Look'd thro'?' or can a part contain the whole?  
     Is the great chain, that draws all to agree,  
 And drawn supports, upheld by God, or thee?

## II

Presumptuous Man! the reason wouldst thou find,  
 Why form'd so weak, so little and so blind?  
 First, if thou canst, the harder reason guess,  
 Why form'd no weaker, blinder, and no less?  
 Ask of thy mother earth, why oaks are made  
 Taller or stronger than the weeds they shade?  
 Or ask of yonder argent fields above,  
 Why JOVE'S satellites are less than JOVE?  
     Of Systems possible, if 'tis confest  
 That Wisdom infinite must form the best,  
 Where all must full or not coherent be,  
 And all that rises, rise in due degree;  
 Then, in the scale of reas'ning life, 'tis plain,  
 There must be, somewhere, such a rank as Man:  
 And all the question (wrangle e'er so long)  
 Is only this, if God has plac'd him wrong?  
     Respecting Man, whatever wrong we call,  
 May, must be right, as relative to all.  
 In human works, tho' labour'd on with pain,  
 A thousand movements scarce one purpose gain;  
 In God's, one single can its end produce;  
 Yet serves to second too some other use.

So Man, who here seems principal alone,  
 Perhaps acts second to some sphere unknown,  
 Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal;  
 'Tis but a part we see, and not a whole.

When the proud steed shall know why Man  
 restrains

His fiery course, or drives him o'er the plains:  
 When the dull Ox, why now he breaks the clod,  
 Is now a victim, and now Ægypt's God:  
 Then shall Man's pride and dulness comprehend  
 His actions', passions', being's, use and end;  
 Why doing, suff'ring, check'd, impell'd; and why  
 This hour a slave, the next a deity.

Then say not Man's imperfect, Heav'n in fault;  
 Say rather, Man's as perfect as he ought:  
 His knowledge measur'd to his state and place;  
 His time a moment, and a point his space.  
 If to be perfect in a certain sphere,  
 What matter, soon or late, or here or there?  
 The blest to day is as completely so,  
 As who began a thousand years ago.

## III

Heav'n from all creatures hides the book of Fate,  
 All but the page prescrib'd, their present state:  
 From brutes what men, from men what spirits know:  
 Or who could suffer Being here below?  
 The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,  
 Had he thy Reason, would he skip and play?  
 Pleas'd to the last, he crops the flow'ry food,  
 And licks the hand just rais'd to shed his blood.  
 Oh blindness to the future! kindly giv'n,  
 That each may fill the circle mark'd by Heav'n:  
 Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,

A hero perish, or a sparrow fall,  
 Atoms or systems into ruin hurl'd,  
 And now a bubble burst, and now a world.

Hope humbly then; with trembling pinions soar;  
 Wait the great teacher Death; and God adore.  
 What future bliss, he gives not thee to know,  
 But gives that Hope to be thy blessing now.  
 Hope springs eternal in the human breast:  
 Man never Is, but always To be blest:  
 The soul, uneasy and confin'd from home,  
 Rests and expatiates in a life to come.

Lo, the poor Indian! whose untutor'd mind  
 Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind;  
 His soul, proud Science never taught to stray  
 Far as the solar walk, or milky way;  
 Yet simple Nature to his hope has giv'n,  
 Behind the cloud-topt hill, an humbler heav'n;  
 Some safer world in depth of woods embrac'd,  
 Some happier island in the watry waste,  
 Where slaves once more their native land behold,  
 No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold.  
 To Be, contents his natural desire,  
 He asks no Angel's wing, no Seraph's fire;  
 But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,  
 His faithful dog shall bear him company.

## IV

Go, wiser thou! and, in thy scale of sense,  
 Weigh thy Opinion against Providence;  
 Call imperfection what thou fancy'st such,  
 Say, here he gives too little, there too much:  
 Destroy all Creatures for thy sport or gust,  
 Yet cry, If Man's unhappy, God's unjust;  
 If Man alone engross not Heav'n's high care,

Alone made perfect here, immortal there:  
 Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,  
 Re-judge his justice, be the GOD of GOD.  
 In Pride, in reas'ning Pride, our error lies;  
 All quit their sphere, and rush into the skies.  
 Pride still is aiming at the blest abodes,  
 Men would be Angels, Angels would be Gods.  
 Aspiring to be Gods, if Angels fell,  
 Aspiring to be Angels, Men rebel:  
 And who but wishes to invert the laws  
 Of ORDER, sins against th' Eternal Cause.

## v

Ask for what end the heav'nly bodies shine,  
 Earth for whose use? Pride answers, 'Tis for mine:  
 For me kind Nature wakes her genial Pow'r,  
 Suckles each herb, and spreads out ev'ry flow'r;  
 Annual for me, the grape, the rose renew  
 The juice nectareous, and the balmy dew;  
 For me, the mine a thousand treasures brings;  
 For me, health gushes from a thousand springs;  
 Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise;  
 My foot-stool earth, my canopy the skies.'

But errs not Nature from this gracious end,  
 From burning suns when livid deaths descend,  
 When earthquakes swallow, or when tempests sweep  
 Towns to one grave, whole nations to the deep?  
 'No, ('tis reply'd) the first Almighty Cause  
 Acts not by partial, but by gen'ral laws;  
 Th' exceptions few; some change since all began:  
 And what created perfect?'—Why then Man?  
 If the great end be human Happiness,  
 Then Nature deviates; and can Man do less?  
 As much that end a constant course requires

Of show'rs and sun-shine, as of Man's desires;  
 As much eternal springs and cloudless skies,  
 As Men for ever temp'rate, calm, and wise.  
 If plagues or earthquakes break not Heav'n's design,  
 Why then a Borgia, or a Catiline?  
 Who knows but he, whose hand the lightning forms,  
 Who heaves old Ocean, and who wings the storms;  
 Pours fierce Ambition in a Cæsar's mind,  
 Or turns young Ammon loose to scourge mankind?<sup>1</sup>  
 From pride, from pride, our very reas'ning springs;  
 Account for moral, as for nat'ral things:  
 Why charge we Heav'n in those, in these acquit?  
 In both, to reason right is to submit.

Better for Us, perhaps, it might appear,  
 Were there all harmony, all virtue here;  
 That never air or ocean felt the wind;  
 That never passion discompos'd the mind.  
 But ALL subsists by elemental strife;  
 And Passions are the elements of Life.  
 The gen'ral ORDER, since the whole began,  
 Is kept in Nature, and is kept in Man.

## VI

What would this Man? Now upward will he soar,  
 And little less than Angel, would be more;  
 Now looking downwards, just as griev'd appears  
 To want the strength of bulls, the fur of bears.  
 Made for his use all creatures if he call,  
 Say what their use, had he the pow'rs of all?  
 Nature to these, without profusion, kind,  
 The proper organs, proper pow'rs assign'd;  
 Each seeming want compensated of course,  
 Here with degrees of swiftness, there of force;

<sup>1</sup>Alexander the Great, who claimed descent from Zeus Ammon.

All in exact proportion to the state;  
 Nothing to add, and nothing to abate,  
 Each beast, each insect, happy in its own:  
 Is Heav'n unkind to Man, and Man alone?  
 Shall he alone, whom rational we call,  
 Be pleas'd with nothing, if not bless'd with all!  
 The bliss of Man (could Pride that blessing find)  
 Is not to act or think beyond mankind;  
 No pow'rs of body or of soul to share,  
 But what his nature and his state can bear.  
 Why has not Man a microscopic eye?  
 For this plain reason, Man is not a Fly.  
 Say what the use, were finer optics giv'n,  
 T' inspect a mite, not comprehend the heav'n?  
 Or touch, if tremblingly alive all o'er,  
 To smart and agonize at every pore?  
 Or quick effluvia darting thro' the brain,  
 Die of a rose in aromatic pain?<sup>1</sup>  
 If nature thunder'd in his op'ning ears,  
 And stunn'd him with the music of the spheres,  
 How would he wish that Heav'n had left him still  
 The whisp'ring Zephyr, and the purling rill?  
 Who finds not Providence all good and wise,  
 Alike in what it gives, and what denies?

## VII

Far as Creation's ample range extends,  
 The scale of sensual, mental pow'rs ascends:  
 Mark how it mounts, to Man's imperial race,  
 From the green myriads in the peopled grass:  
 What modes of sight betwixt each wide extreme,  
 The mole's dim curtain, and the lynx's beam:

<sup>1</sup>This exquisite line was adapted, with improvements, from a poem by that interesting seventeenth-century writer, Lady Winchilsea.

Of smell, the headlong lioness between,  
And hound sagacious on the tainted green:  
Of hearing, from the life that fills the Flood,  
To that which warbles thro' the vernal wood:  
The spider's touch, how exquisitely fine!  
Feels at each thread, and lives along the line:  
In the nice bee, what sense so subtly true  
From pois'nous herbs extracts the healing dew?  
How Instinct varies in the grov'ling swine,  
Compar'd, half-reas'ning elephant, with thine!  
'Twixt that, and Reason, what a nice barrier,  
For ever sep'rate, yet for ever near!  
Remembrance and Reflection how ally'd;  
What thin partitions Sense from Thought divide:  
And Middle natures, how they long to join,  
Yet never pass th' insuperable line!  
Without this just gradation, could they be  
Subjected, these to those, or all to thee?  
The pow'rs of all subdu'd by thee alone,  
Is not thy Reason all these pow'rs in one?

## VIII

See, thro' this air, this ocean, and this earth,  
All matter quick, and bursting into birth.  
Above, how high, progressive life may go!  
Around, how wide! how deep extend below!  
Vast chain of Being! which from God began,  
Natures ethereal, human, angel, man,  
Beast, bird, fish, insect, what no eye can see,  
No glass can reach; from Infinite to thee,  
From thee to Nothing.—On superior pow'rs  
Were we to press, inferior might on ours:  
Or in the full creation leave a void,  
Where, one step broken, the great scale's destroy'd:

From Nature's chain whatever link you strike,  
Tenth or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike.

And, if each system in gradation roll  
Alike essential to th' amazing Whole,  
The least confusion but in one, not all  
That system only, but the Whole must fall.  
Let Earth unbalanc'd from her orbit fly.  
Planets and Suns run lawless thro' the sky;  
Let ruling Angels from their spheres be hurl'd,  
Being on Being wreck'd, and world on world;  
Heav'n's whole foundations to their centre nod,  
And Nature tremble to the throne of God.  
All this dread ORDER break—for whom? for thee?  
Vile worm!—Oh Madness! Pride! Impiety!

## IX

What if the foot, ordain'd the dust to tread,  
Or hand, to toil, aspir'd to be the head?  
What if the head, the eye, or ear repin'd  
To serve mere engines to the ruling Mind?  
Just as absurd for any part to claim  
To be another, in this gen'ral frame:  
Just as absurd, to mourn the tasks or pains,  
The great directing MIND of ALL ordains.

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,  
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;  
That, chang'd thro' all, and yet in all the same;  
Great in the earth, as in th' ethereal frame;  
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,  
Glow's in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,  
Lives thro' all life, extends thro' all extent,  
Spreads undivided, operates unspent;  
Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,  
As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart:



As full, as perfect, in vile Man that mourns,  
 As the rapt Seraph that adores and burns:  
 To him no high, no low, no great, no small;  
 He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all.

x

Cease then, nor ORDER Imperfection name:  
 Our proper bliss depends on what we blame.  
 Know thy own point: This kind, this due degree  
 Of blindness, weakness, Heav'n bestows on thee.  
 Submit.—In this, or any other sphere,  
 Secure to be as blest as thou canst bear:  
 Safe in the hand of one disposing Pow'r,  
 Or in the natal, or the mortal hour.  
 All Nature is but Art, unknown to thee;  
 All Chance, Direction, which thou canst not see;  
 All Discord, Harmony not understood;  
 All partial Evil, universal Good:  
 And, spite of Pride, in erring Reason's spite,  
 One truth is clear, *WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT.*

## EPISTLE II

*Of the Nature and State of Man with respect  
 to HIMSELF, as an Individual*

I

KNOW then thyself, presume not God to scan;  
 The proper study of Mankind is Man.  
 Plac'd on this isthmus of a middle state,  
 A Being darkly wise, and rudely great:  
 With too much knowledge for the Sceptic side,  
 With too much weakness for the Stoic's pride,  
 He hangs between; in doubt to act, or rest;  
 In doubt to deem himself a God, or Beast;

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In doubt his Mind or Body to prefer;  
Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err;  
Alike in ignorance, his reason such,  
Whether he thinks too little, or too much:  
Chaos of Thought and Passion, all confus'd;  
Still by himself abus'd, or disabus'd;  
Created half to rise, and half to fall;  
Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all;  
Sole judge of Truth, in endless Error hurl'd:  
The glory, jest, and riddle of the world!

Go, wond'rous creature! mount where Science  
guides,

Go, measure earth, weigh air, and state the tides;  
Instruct the planets in what orbs to run,  
Correct old Time, and regulate the Sun;  
Go, soar with Plato to th' empyreal sphere,  
To the first good, first perfect, and first fair;  
Or tread the mazy round his follow'rs trod,  
And quitting sense call imitating God;  
As Eastern priests in giddy circles run,  
And turn their heads to imitate the Sun.  
Go, teach Eternal Wisdom how to rule—  
Then drop into thyself, and be a fool!

Superior beings, when of late they saw  
A mortal Man unfold all Nature's law,  
Admir'd such wisdom in an earthly shape,  
And shew'd a NEWTON as we shew an Ape.

Could he, whose rules the rapid Comet bind,  
Describe or fix one movement of his Mind?  
Who saw its fires here rise, and there descend,  
Explain his own beginning, or his end?  
Alas what wonder! Man's superior part  
Uncheck'd may rise, and climb from art to art;  
But when his own great work is but begun,

What Reason weaves, by Passion is undone.

Trace Science then, with Modesty thy guide;  
 First strip off all her equipage of Pride;  
 Deduct what is but Vanity, or Dress,  
 Or Learning's Luxury, or Idleness;  
 Or tricks to shew the stretch of human brain,  
 Mere curious pleasure, or ingenious pain;  
 Expunge the whole, or lop th' excrescent parts  
 Of all our Vices have created Arts;  
 Then see how little the remaining sum,  
 Which serv'd the past, and must the times to come!

## II

Two Principles in human nature reign;  
 Self-love, to urge, and Reason, to restrain;  
 Nor this a good, nor that a bad we call,  
 Each works its end, to move or govern all:  
 And to their proper operation still,  
 Ascribe all Good; to their improper, Ill.

Self-love, the spring of motion, acts the soul;  
 Reason's comparing balance rules the whole.  
 Man, but for that, no action could attend,  
 And but for this, were active to no end:  
 Fix'd like a plant on his peculiar spot,  
 To draw nutrition, propagate, and rot;  
 Or, meteor-like, flame lawless thro' the void,  
 Destroying others, by himself destroy'd.

Most strength the moving principle requires;  
 Active its task, it prompts, impels, inspires.  
 Sedate and quiet the comparing lies,  
 Form'd but to check, delib'rate, and advise.  
 Self-love still stronger, as its objects nigh;  
 Reason's at distance, and in prospect lie:  
 That sees immediate good by present sense;

Reason, the future and the consequence.  
 Thicker than arguments, temptations throng,  
 At best more watchful this, but that more strong.  
 The action of the stronger to suspend,  
 Reason still use, to Reason still attend.  
 Attention, habit and experience gains;  
 Each strengthens Reason, and Self-love restrains.

Let subtle schoolmen teach these friends to fight,  
 More studious to divide than to unite;  
 And Grace and Virtue, Sense and Reason split,  
 With all the rash dexterity of wit.  
 Wits, just like Fools, at war about a name,  
 Have full as oft no meaning, or the same.  
 Self-love and Reason to one end aspire,  
 Pain their aversion, Pleasure their desire;  
 But greedy That, its object would devour,  
 This taste the honey, and not wound the flow'r :  
 Pleasure, or wrong or rightly understood,  
 Our greatest evil, or our greatest good.

## III

Modes of Self-love the Passions we may call;  
 'Tis real good, or seeming, moves them all :  
 But since not ev'ry good we can divide,  
 And Reason bids us for our own provide;  
 Passions, tho' selfish, if their means be fair,  
 List under Reason, and deserve her care;  
 Those, that imparted, court a nobler aim,  
 Exalt their kind, and take some Virtue's name.

In lazy Apathy let Stoics boast  
 Their Virtue fix'd; 'tis fix'd as in a frost;  
 Contracted all, retiring to the breast;  
 But strength of mind is Exercise, not Rest :  
 The rising tempest puts in act the soul,

Parts it may ravage, but preserves the whole.  
 On life's vast ocean diversely we sail,  
 Reason the card, but Passion is the gale;  
 Nor God alone in the still calm we find,  
 He mounts the storm, and walks upon the wind.

Passions, like Elements, tho' born to fight,  
 Yet, mix'd and soften'd, in his work unite:  
 These 'tis enough to temper and employ;  
 But what composes Man, can Man destroy?  
 Suffice that Reason keep to Nature's road,  
 Subject, compound them, follow her and God.  
 Love, Hope, and Joy, fair pleasure's smiling train,  
 Hate, Fear, and Grief, the family of pain,  
 These mix'd with art, and to due bounds confin'd,  
 Make and maintain the balance of the mind:  
 The lights and shades, whose well accorded strife  
 Gives all the strength and colour of our life.

Pleasures are ever in our hands or eyes;  
 And when in act they cease, in prospect rise:  
 Present to grasp, and future still to find,  
 The whole employ of body and of mind.  
 All spread their charms, but charm not all alike;  
 On diff'rent senses diff'rent objects strike;  
 Hence diff'rent Passions more or less inflame,  
 As strong or weak, the organs of the frame;  
 And hence once MASTER PASSION in the breast,  
 Like Aaron's serpent, swallows up the rest.

As Man, perhaps, the moment of his breath,  
 Receives the lurking principle of death;  
 The young disease, that must subdue at length,  
 Grows with his growth, and strengthens with his  
 strength:

So, cast and mingled with his very frame,  
 The Mind's disease, its RULING PASSION came;

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Each vital humour which should feed the whole,  
Soon flows to this, in body and in soul:  
Whatever warms the heart, or fills the head,  
As the mind opens, and its functions spread,  
Imagination plies her dang'rous art,  
And pours it all upon the peccant part.

Nature its mother, Habit is its nurse;  
Wit, Spirit, Faculties, but make it worse;  
Reason itself but gives it edge and pow'r;  
As Heav'n's blest beam turns vinegar more sour.

We, wretched subjects, tho' to lawful sway,  
In this weak queen some fav'rite still obey:  
Ah! if she lend not arms, as well as rules,  
What can she more than tell us we are fools?  
Teach us to mourn our Nature, not to mend,  
A sharp accuser, but a helpless friend!  
Or from a judge turn pleader, to persuade  
The choice we make, or justify it made;  
Proud of an easy conquest all along,  
She but removes weak passions for the strong:  
So, when small humours gather to a gout,  
The doctor fancies he has driv'n them out.

Yes, Nature's road must ever be preferr'd;  
Reason is here no guide, but still a guard:  
'Tis hers to rectify, not overthrow,  
And treat this passion more as friend than foe:  
A mightier Pow'r the strong direction sends,  
And sev'ral Men impels to sev'ral ends:  
Like varying winds, by other passions tost,  
This drives them constant to a certain coast.  
Let pow'r or knowledge, gold or glory, please,  
Or (oft more strong than all) the love of ease;  
Thro' life 'tis follow'd, ev'n at life's expense;  
The merchant's toil, the sage's indolence,

The monk's humility, the hero's pride,  
All, all alike, find Reason on their side.

Th' Eternal Art educing good from ill,  
Grafts on this Passion our best principle:  
'Tis thus the Mercury of Man is fix'd,  
Strong grows the Virtue with his nature mix'd;  
The dross cements what else were too refin'd,  
And in one interest body acts with mind.

As fruits, ungrateful to the planter's care,  
On savage stocks inserted, learn to bear;  
The surest Virtues thus from Passions shoot,  
Wild Nature's vigour working at the root.  
What crops of wit and honesty appear  
From spleen, from obstinacy, hate, or fear!  
See anger, zeal and fortitude supply;  
Ev'n av'rice, prudence; sloth, philosophy;  
Lust, thro' some certain strainers well refin'd,  
Is gentle love, and charms all womankind;  
Envy, to which th' ignoble mind's a slave,  
Is emulation in the learn'd or brave;  
Nor Virtue, male or female, can we name,  
But what will grow on Pride, or grow on Shame.

This Nature gives us (let it check our pride)  
The virtue nearest to our vice ally'd:  
Reason the bias turns to good from ill,  
And Nero reigns a Titus, if he will.  
The fiery soul abhor'd in Catiline,  
In Decius charms, in Curtius is divine:  
The same ambition can destroy or save,  
And makes a patriot as it makes a knave.

This light and darkness in our chaos join'd,  
What shall divide? The God within the mind:

Extremes in Nature equal ends produce,  
In Man they join to some mysterious use;

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Tho' each by turns the other's bound invade,  
As, in some well-wrought picture, light and shade,  
And oft so mix, the diff'rence is too nice  
Where ends the Virtue, or begins the Vice.

Fools! who from hence into the notion fall,  
That Vice or Virtue there is none at all.  
If white and black blend, soften, and unite  
A thousand ways, is there no black or white?  
Ask your own heart, and nothing is so plain;  
'Tis to mistake them, costs the time and pain.

Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,  
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;  
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,  
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.  
But where th' Extreme of Vice, was ne'er agreed:  
Ask where's the North? at York, 'tis on the Tweed;  
In Scotland, at the Orcades; and there,  
At Greenland, Zembla, or the Lord knows where.  
No creature owns it in the first degree,  
But thinks his neighbour further gone than he;  
Ev'n those who dwell beneath its very zone,  
Or never feel the rage, or never own;  
What happier natures shrink at with affright,  
The hard inhabitant contends is right.

Virtuous and vicious ev'ry Man must be,  
Few in th' extreme, but all in the degree;  
The rogue and fool by fits is fair and wise;  
And ev'n the best, by fits, what they despise.  
'Tis but by parts we follow good or ill;  
For, Vice or Virtue, Self directs it still;  
Each individual seeks a sev'ral goal;  
But HEAV'N'S great view is One, and that the  
Whole.

That counter-works each folly and caprice;



That disappoints th' effect of ev'ry vice;  
 That, happy frailties to all ranks apply'd,  
 Shame to the virgin, to the matron pride,  
 Fear to the statesman, rashness to the chief,  
 To kings presumption, and to crowds belief:  
 That, Virtue's ends from Vanity can raise,  
 Which seeks no int'rest, no reward but praise;  
 And build on wants, and on defects of mind,  
 The joy, the peace, the glory of Mankind.

Heav'n forming each on other to depend,  
 A master, or a servant, or a friend,  
 Bids each on other for assistance call,  
 Till one Man's weakness grows the strength of all.  
 Wants, frailties, passions, closer still ally  
 The common int'rest, or endear the tie.  
 To these we owe true friendship, love sincere,  
 Each home-felt joy that life inherits here;  
 Yet from the same we learn, in its decline,  
 Those joys, those loves, those int'rests to resign;  
 Taught half by Reason, half by mere decay,  
 To welcome death, and calmly pass away.

Whate'er the Passion, knowledge, fame, or pelf,  
 Not one will change his neighbour with himself.  
 The learn'd is happy nature to explore,  
 The fool is happy that he knows no more;  
 The rich is happy in the plenty giv'n,  
 The poor contents him with the care of Heav'n.  
 See the blind beggar dance, the cripple sing,  
 The sot a hero, lunatic a king;  
 The starving chemist in his golden views  
 Supremely blest, the poet in his Muse.

See some strange comfort ev'ry state attend,  
 And Pride bestow'd on all, a common friend;  
 See some fit Passion ev'ry age supply,

Hope travels thro', nor quits us when we die.

Behold the child, by Nature's kindly law,  
 Pleas'd with a rattle, tickled with a straw:  
 Some livelier play-thing gives his youth delight,  
 A little louder, but as empty quite:  
 Scarfs, garters, gold, amuse his riper stage,  
 And beads and pray'r-books are the toys of age:  
 Pleas'd with this bauble still, as that before;  
 'Till tir'd he sleeps, and Life's poor play is o'er.

Mean-while Opinion gilds with varying rays  
 Those painted clouds that beautify our days;  
 Each want of happiness by hope supply'd,  
 And each vacuity of sense by Pride:  
 These build as fast as knowledge can destroy;  
 In Folly's cup still laughs the bubble, joy;  
 One prospect lost, another still we gain;  
 And not a vanity is giv'n in vain;  
 Ev'n mean Self-love becomes, by force divine,  
 The scale to measure others' wants by thine.  
 See! and confess, one comfort still must rise,  
 'Tis this, Tho' Man's a fool, yet GOD IS WISE.

### EPISTLE III

*Of the Nature and State of Man with  
 respect to SOCIETY*

#### I

HERE then we rest: 'The Universal Cause  
 Acts to one end, but acts by various laws.'  
 In all the madness of superfluous health,  
 The trim of pride, the impudence of wealth,  
 Let this great truth be present night and day;  
 But most be present, if we preach or pray.

Look round our World; behold the chain of Love  
 Combining all below and all above.  
 See plastic Nature working to this end,  
 The single atoms each to other tend,  
 Attract, attracted to, the next in place  
 Form'd and impell'd its neighbour to embrace.  
 See Matter next, with various life endu'd,  
 Press to one centre still, the gen'ral Good.  
 See dying vegetables life sustain,  
 See life dissolving vegetate again:  
 All forms that perish other forms supply,  
 (By turns we catch the vital breath, and die,)  
 Like bubbles on the sea of Matter born,  
 They rise, they break, and to that sea return.  
 Nothing is foreign: Parts relate to whole;  
 One all-extending, all-preserving Soul  
 Connects each being, greatest with the least;  
 Made Beast in aid of Man, and Man of Beast;  
 All serv'd, all serving: nothing stands alone;  
 The chain holds on, and where it ends, unknown.

Has God, thou fool! work'd solely for thy good,  
 Thy joy, thy pastime, thy attire, thy food?  
 Who for thy table feeds the wanton fawn,  
 For him as kindly spread the flow'ry lawn:  
 Is it for thee the lark ascends and sings?  
 Joy tunes his voice, joy elevates his wings.  
 Is it for thee the linnet pours his throat?  
 Loves of his own and raptures swell the note.  
 The bounding steed you pompously bestride,  
 Shares with his lord the pleasure and the pride.  
 Is thine alone the seed that strews the plain?  
 The birds of heav'n shall vindicate their grain.  
 Thine the full harvest of the golden year?  
 Part pays, and justly, the deserving steer:

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The hog, that ploughs not nor obeys thy call,  
Lives on the labours of this lord of all.

Know, Nature's children all divide her care;  
The fur that warms a monarch, warm'd a bear.  
While Man exclaims, 'See all things for my use!'  
'See man for mine!' replies a pamper'd goose:  
And just as short of reason he must fall,  
Who thinks all made for one, not one for all.

Grant that the pow'rful still the weak controul;  
Be Man the Wit and Tyrant of the whole:  
Nature that Tyrant checks; he only knows,  
And helps, another creature's wants and woes.  
Say, will the falcon, stooping from above,  
Smit with her varying plumage, spare the dove?  
Admires the jay the insect's gilded wings?  
Or hears the hawk when Philomela sings?  
Man cares for all: to birds he gives his woods,  
To beasts his pastures, and to fish his floods;  
For some his Int'rest prompts him to provide,  
For more his pleasure, yet for more his pride:  
All feed on one vain Patron, and enjoy  
Th' extensive blessing of his luxury.  
That very life his learned hunger craves,  
He saves from famine, from the savage saves;  
Nay, feasts the animal he dooms his feast,  
And, 'till he ends the being, makes it blest;  
Which sees no more the stroke, or feels the pain,  
Than favour'd Man by touch ethereal slain.  
The creature had his feast of life before;  
Thou too must perish, when thy feast is o'er!  
To each unthinking being Heav'n, a friend,  
Gives not the useless knowledge of its end:  
To Man imparts it; but with such a view  
As, while he dreads it, makes him hope it too:

The hour conceal'd, and so remote the fear,  
 Death still draws nearer, never seeming near.  
 Great standing miracle! that Heav'n assign'd  
 Its only thinking thing this turn of mind.

## II

Whether with Reason, or with Instinct blest,  
 Know, all enjoy that pow'r which suits them best;  
 To bliss alike by that direction tend,  
 And find the means proportion'd to their end.  
 Say, where full Instinct is th' unerring guide,  
 What Pope or Council can they need beside?  
 Reason, however able, cool at best,  
 Cares not for service, or but serves when prest,  
 Stays 'till we call, and then not often near;  
 But honest Instinct comes a volunteer,  
 Sure never to o'er-shoot, but just to hit;  
 While still too wide or short is human Wit;  
 Sure by quick Nature happiness to gain,  
 Which heavier Reason labours at in vain,  
 This too serves always, Reason never long;  
 One must go right, the other may go wrong.  
 See then the acting and comparing pow'rs  
 One in their nature, which are two in ours;  
 And Reason raise o'er Instinct as you can,  
 In this 'tis God directs, in that 'tis Man.

Who taught the nations of the field and wood  
 To shun their poison, and to choose their food?  
 Prescient, the tides or tempests to withstand,  
 Build on the wave, or arch beneath the sand?  
 Who made the spider parallels design,  
 Sure as Demoiivre,<sup>1</sup> without rule or line?  
 Who did the stork, Columbus-like, explore

<sup>1</sup>Famous French mathematician, born 1667.

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Heav'ns not his own, and worlds unknown before?  
Who calls the council, states the certain day,  
Who forms the phalanx, and who points the way?

## III

God in the nature of each being finds  
Its proper bliss, and sets its proper bounds:  
But as he fram'd a Whole, the Whole to bless,  
On mutual Wants built mutual Happiness:  
So from the first, eternal ORDER ran,  
And creature link'd to creature, man to man.  
Whate'er of life all-quick'ning æther keeps,  
Or breathes thro' air, or shoots beneath the deeps,  
Or pours profuse on earth, one nature feeds  
The vital flame, and swells the genial seeds.  
Not Man alone, but all that roam the wood,  
Or wing the sky, or roll along the flood,  
Each loves itself, but not itself alone,  
Each sex desires alike, 'till two are one.  
Nor ends the pleasure with the fierce embrace;  
They love themselves, a third time, in their race.  
Thus beast and bird their common charge attend,  
The mothers nurse it, and the sires defend;  
The young dismiss'd to wander earth or air,  
There stops the Instinct, and there ends the care;  
The link dissolves, each seeks a fresh embrace,  
Another love succeeds, another race.  
A longer care Man's helpless kind demands;  
That longer care contracts more lasting bands:  
Reflection, Reason, still the ties improve,  
At once extend the int'rest, and the love;  
With choice we fix, with sympathy we burn;  
Each Virtue in each Passion takes its turn;  
And still new needs, new helps, new habits rise,

That graft benevolence on charities.  
 Still as one brood, and as another rose,  
 These nat'ral love maintain'd, habitual those:  
 The last, scarce ripen'd into perfect Man,  
 Saw helpless him from whom their life began:  
 Mem'ry and fore-cast just returns engage,  
 That pointed back to youth, this on to age;  
 While pleasure, gratitude, and hope, combin'd,  
 Still spread the int'rest, and preserv'd the kind.

## IV

Nor think, in NATURE'S STATE they blindly trod;  
 The state of Nature was the reign of God:  
 Self-love and Social at her birth began,  
 Union the bond of all things, and of Man.  
 Pride then was not; nor Arts, that Pride to aid;  
 Man walk'd with beast, joint tenant of the shade;  
 The same his table, and the same his bed;  
 No murder cloth'd him, and no murder fed.  
 In the same temple, the resounding wood,  
 All vocal beings hymn'd their equal God:  
 The shrine with gore unstain'd, with gold undrest,  
 Unbrib'd, unbloody, stood the blameless priest:  
 Heav'n's attribute was Universal Care,  
 And Man's prerogative to rule, but spare.  
 Ah! how unlike the man of times to come!  
 Of half that live the butcher and the tomb,  
 Who, foe to Nature, hears the gen'ral groan,  
 Murders their species, and betrays his own.  
 But just disease to luxury succeeds,  
 And ev'ry death its own avenger breeds;  
 The Fury-passions from that blood began,  
 And turn'd on Man a fiercer savage, Man.  
 See him from Nature rising slow to Art!

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To copy Instinct then was Reason's part;  
Thus then to Man the voice of Nature spake—  
'Go, from the Creatures thy instructions take:  
'Learn from the birds what food the thickets yield;  
'Learn from the beasts the physic of the field;  
'Thy arts of building from the bee receive;  
'Learn of the mole to plough, the worm to weave;  
'Learn of the little Nautilus to sail,  
'Spread the thin oar, and catch the driving gale.  
'Here too all forms of social union find,  
'And hence let Reason, late, instruct Mankind:  
'Here subterranean works and cities see;  
'There towns aerial on the waving tree.  
'Learn each small People's genius, policies,  
'The Ant's republic, and the realm of Bees;  
'How those in common all their wealth bestow,  
'And Anarchy without confusion know;  
'And these for ever, tho' a Monarch reign,  
'Their sep'rate cells and properties maintain.  
'Mark what unvary'd laws preserve each state,  
'Laws wise as Nature, and as fix'd as Fate.  
'In vain thy Reason finer webs shall draw,  
'Entangle Justice in her net of Law,  
'And right, too rigid, harden into wrong;  
'Still for the strong too weak, the weak too strong.  
'Yet go! and thus o'er all the creatures sway,  
'Thus let the wiser make the rest obey;  
'And for those Arts mere Instinct could afford,  
'Be crown'd as Monarchs, or as Gods ador'd'.

v

Great Nature spoke; observant Men obey'd;  
Cities were built, Societies were made:  
Here rose one little state; another near



Grew by like means, and join'd, thro' love or fear.  
 Did here the trees with ruddier burdens bend,  
 And there the streams in purer rills descend?  
 What War could ravish, Commerce could bestow,  
 And he return'd a friend, who came a foe.  
 Converse and Love mankind might strongly draw,  
 When Love was Liberty, and Nature Law.  
 Thus States were form'd; the name of King  
     unknown,  
 'Till common int'rest plac'd the sway in one.  
 'Twas VIRTUE ONLY (or in arts or arms,  
 Diffusing blessings, or averting harms)  
 The same which in a Sire the Sons obey'd,  
 A Prince the Father of a People made.

## VI

'Till then, by Nature crown'd, each Patriarch sate,  
 King, priest, and parent of his growing state;  
 On him, their second Providence, they hung,  
 Their law his eye, their oracle his tongue.  
 He from the wond'ring furrow call'd the food,  
 Taught to command the fire, control the flood,  
 Draw forth the monsters of th' abyss profound,  
 Or fetch th' aerial eagle to the ground.  
 'Till drooping, sick'ning, dying they began  
 Whom they rever'd as God to mourn as Man:  
 Then, looking up from sire to sire, explor'd  
 One great first father, and that first ador'd.  
 Or plain tradition that this All begun,  
 Convey'd unbroken faith from sire to son;  
 The worker from the work distinct was known,  
 And simple Reason never sought but one:  
 Ere Wit oblique had broke that steady light,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>An allusion to the prismatic glass, then a popular scientific toy.

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Man, like his Maker, saw that all was right;  
To Virtue, in the paths of Pleasure, trod,  
And own'd a Father when he own'd a God.  
LOVE all the faith, and all th' allegiance then;  
For Nature knew no right divine in Men,  
No ill could fear in God; and understood  
A sov'reign being but a sov'reign good.  
True faith, true policy, united ran,  
This was but love of God, and this of Man.

Who first taught souls enslav'd, and realms undone,  
Th' enormous faith of many made for one;  
That proud exception to all Nature's laws,  
T' invert the world, and counter-work its Cause?  
Force first made Conquest, and that conquest, Law;  
'Till Superstition taught the tyrant awe,  
Then shar'd the Tyranny, then lent it aid,  
And Gods of Conqu'rors, Slaves of Subjects made:  
She 'midst the lightning's blaze, and thunder's sound,  
When rock'd the mountains, and when groan'd the  
ground,

She taught the weak to bend, the proud to pray,  
To Pow'r unseen, and mightier far than they:  
She, from the rending earth and bursting skies,  
Saw Gods descend, and fiends infernal rise:  
Here fix'd the dreadful, there the blest abodes;  
Fear made her Devils, and weak Hope her Gods;  
Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust,  
Whose attributes were Rage, Revenge, or Lust;  
Such as the souls of cowards might conceive,  
And, form'd like tyrants, tyrants would believe.  
Zeal then, not charity, became the guide;  
And hell was built on spite, and heav'n on pride,  
Then sacred seem'd th' ethereal vault no more;  
Altars grew marble then, and reek'd with gore:

Then first the Flamen tasted living food;  
 Next his grim idol smear'd with human blood;  
 With Heav'n's own thunders shook the world below,  
 And play'd the God an engine on his foe.

So drives Self-love, thro' just and thro' unjust,  
 To one Man's pow'r, ambition, lucre, lust:  
 The same Self-love, in all, becomes the cause  
 Of what restrains him, Government and Laws.  
 For, what one likes if others like as well,  
 What serves one will, when many wills rebel?  
 How shall he keep, what, sleeping or awake,  
 A weaker may surprise, a stronger take?  
 His safety must his liberty restrain:  
 All join to guard what each desires to gain.  
 Forc'd into virtue thus by Self-defence,  
 Ev'n Kings learn'd justice and benevolence:  
 Self-love forsook the path it first pursu'd,  
 And found the private in the public good.

'Twas then, the studious head or gen'rous mind,  
 Follow'r of God or friend of human-kind,  
 Poet or Patriot, rose but to restore  
 The Faith and Moral Nature gave before;  
 Re-lum'd her ancient light, not kindled new;  
 If not God's image, yet his shadow drew:  
 Taught Pow'r's due use to People and to Kings,  
 Taught nor to slack, nor strain its tender strings,  
 The less, or greater, set so justly true,  
 That touching one must strike the other too;  
 'Till jarring int'rests, of themselves create  
 Th' according music of a well-mix'd State.  
 Such is the World's great harmony, that springs  
 From Order, Union, full Consent of things:  
 Where small and great, where weak and mighty,  
 made

To serve, not suffer, strengthen, not invade;  
 More pow'rful each as needful to the rest,  
 And, in proportion as it blesses, blest;  
 Draw to one point, and to one centre bring  
 Beast, Man, or Angel, Servant, Lord, or King.

For Forms of Government let fools contest;  
 Whate'er is best administer'd is best:  
 For Modes of Faith let graceless zealots fight;  
 His can't be wrong whose life is in the right:  
 In Faith and Hope the world will disagree,  
 But all Mankind's concern is Charity:  
 All must be false that thwart this One great End;  
 And all of God, that bless Mankind or mend.

Man, like the gen'rous vine, supported lives;  
 The strength he gains is from th' embrace he gives.  
 On their own Axis as the Planets run,  
 Yet make at once their circle round the Sun;  
 So two consistent motions act the Soul;  
 And one regards Itself, and one the Whole.

Thus God and Nature link'd the gen'ral frame,  
 And bade Self-love and Social be the same.

#### EPISTLE IV

*Of the Nature and State of Man with  
 respect to HAPPINESS*

OH HAPPINESS! our being's end and aim!  
 Good, Pleasure, Ease, Content! whate'er thy name:  
 That something still which prompts th' eternal sigh,  
 For which we bear to live, or dare to die,  
 Which still so near us, yet beyond us lies,  
 O'er-look'd, seen double, by the fool, and wise.  
 Plant of celestial seed! if dropt below,  
 Say, in what mortal soil thou deign'st to grow?

Fair op'ning to some Court's propitious shine,  
 Or deep with di'monds in the flaming mine?  
 Twin'd with the wreaths Parnassian laurels yield,  
 Or reap'd in iron harvests of the field?  
 Where grows?—where grows it not? If vain our toil,  
 We ought to blame the culture, not the soil.  
 Fix'd to no spot is Happiness sincere,  
 'Tis nowhere to be found, or ev'rywhere;  
 'Tis never to be bought, but always free,  
 And fled from monarchs, ST. JOHN! dwells with thee.  
 Ask of the Learn'd the way? The Learn'd are  
 blind;

This bids to serve, and that to shun mankind;  
 Some place the bliss in action, some in ease,  
 Those call it Pleasure, and Contentment these;  
 Some sunk to Beasts, find pleasure end in pain;  
 Some swell'd to Gods, confess ev'n Virtue vain;  
 Or indolent, to each extreme they fall,  
 To trust in ev'ry thing, or doubt of all.

Who thus define it, say they more or less  
 Than this, that Happiness is Happiness?

Take Nature's path, and mad Opinion's leave;  
 All states can reach it, and all heads conceive;  
 Obvious her goods, in no extreme they dwell;  
 There needs but thinking right, and meaning well;  
 And mourn our various portions as we please,  
 Equal is Common Sense, and Common Ease.

Remember, Man, 'the Universal Cause  
 'Acts not by partial, but by gen'ral laws';  
 And makes what Happiness we justly call  
 Subsist not in the good of one, but all.  
 There's not a blessing Individuals find,  
 But some way leans and hearkens to the kind:  
 No Bandit fierce, no Tyrant mad with pride,

No cavern'd Hermit, rests self-satisfy'd:  
 Who most to shun or hate Mankind pretend,  
 Seek an admirer, or would fix a friend:  
 Abstract what others feel, what others think,  
 All pleasures sicken, and all glories sink:  
 Each has his share; and who would more obtain,  
 Shall find, the pleasure pays not half the pain.

ORDER is Heaven's first law; and this confest,  
 Some are, and must be, greater than the rest,  
 More rich, more wise; but who infers from hence  
 That such are happier, shocks all common sense.  
 Heav'n to Mankind impartial we confess,  
 If all are equal in their Happiness:  
 But mutual wants this Happiness increase;  
 All Nature's diff'rence keeps all Nature's peace.  
 Condition, circumstance is not the thing;  
 Bliss is the same in subject or in king,  
 In who obtain defence, or who defend,  
 In him who is, or him who finds a friend:  
 Heav'n breathes thro' ev'ry member of the whole  
 One common blessing, as one common soul.  
 But Fortune's gifts if each alike possest,  
 And each were equal, must not all contest?  
 If then to all Men Happiness was meant,  
 God in Externals could not place Content.

Fortune her gifts may variously dispose,  
 And these be happy call'd, unhappy those;  
 But Heav'n's just balance equal will appear,  
 While those are plac'd in Hope, and these in Fear:  
 Nor present good or ill, the joy or curse,  
 But future views of better, or of worse.

Oh sons of earth! attempt ye still to rise,  
 By mountains pil'd on mountains, to the skies?  
 Heav'n still with laughter the vain toil surveys,

And buries madmen in the heaps they raise.

Know, all the good that individuals find,  
Or God and Nature meant to mere Mankind,  
Reason's whole pleasure, all the joys of Sense,  
Lie in three words, Health, Peace, and Competence.  
But Health consists with Temperance alone;  
And Peace, oh Virtue! Peace is all thy own.  
The good or bad the gifts of Fortune gain;  
But these less taste them, as they worse obtain.  
Say, in pursuit of profit or delight,  
Who risk the most, that take wrong means, or right?  
Of Vice or Virtue, whether blest or curst,  
Which meets contempt, or which compassion first?  
Count all th' advantage prosp'rous Vice attains,  
'Tis but what Virtue flies from and disdains:  
And grant the bad what happiness they would,  
One they must want, which is, to pass for good.

Oh blind to truth, and God's whole scheme below,  
Who fancy Bliss to Vice, to Virtue Woe!  
Who sees and follows that great scheme the best,  
Best knows the blessing, and will most be blest.  
But fools the Good alone unhappy call,  
For ills or accidents that chance to all.  
See FALKLAND dies, the virtuous and the just!<sup>1</sup>  
See god-like TURENNE prostrate on the dust!  
See SIDNEY bleeds amid the martial strife!  
Was this their Virtue, or Contempt of Life?  
Say, was it Virtue, more tho' Heav'n ne'er gave,  
Lamented DIGBY!<sup>2</sup> sunk thee to the grave?  
Tell me, if Virtue made the Son expire,

<sup>1</sup>Lord Falkland, 'that incomparable young man', who, beginning life as a Parliamentarian, eventually seceded to the Royalists and fell fighting under the Royal Standard at the Battle of Newbury.

<sup>2</sup>The Hon. Robert Digby, elsewhere the subject of one of Pope's epitaphs.

Why, full of days and honour, lives the Sire?  
 Why drew Marseille's good bishop purer breath,<sup>1</sup>  
 When Nature sicken'd, and each gale was death?  
 Or why so long (in life if long can be)  
 Lent Heav'n a parent to the poor and me?<sup>2</sup>

What makes all physical or moral ill?  
 There deviates Nature, and here wanders Will.  
 God sends not ill; if rightly understood,  
 Or partial Ill is universal Good,  
 Or Change admits, or Nature lets it fall;  
 Short, and but rare, till Man improv'd it all.  
 We just as wisely might of Heav'n complain  
 That righteous Abel was destroy'd by Cain,  
 As that the virtuous son is ill at ease  
 When his lewd father gave the dire disease.  
 Think we, like some weak Prince, th' Eternal Cause  
 Prone for his fav'rites to reverse his laws?

Shall burning *Ætna*, if a sage requires,  
 Forget to thunder, and recall her fires?  
 On air or sea new motions be imprest,  
 Oh blameless Bethel!<sup>3</sup> to relieve thy breast?  
 When the loose mountain trembles from on high,  
 Shall gravitation cease, if you go by?  
 Or some old temple, nodding to its fall,  
 For Chartres' head reserve the hanging wall?

But still this world (so fitted for the knave)  
 Contents us not. A better shall we have?  
 A kingdom of the Just then let it be:  
 But first consider how those Just agree.  
 The good must merit God's peculiar care;

<sup>1</sup>M. de Belsance, famed for his efforts during an outbreak of plague at Marseilles in 1709.

<sup>2</sup>Pope's mother died in 1733, the year during which the *Essay* was finished.

<sup>3</sup>Hugh Bethell, of Yorkshire, among the poet's closest friends.



But who, but God, can tell us who they are?  
 One thinks on Calvin Heav'n's own spirit fell;  
 Another deems him instrument of hell;  
 If Calvin feel Heav'n's blessing, or its rod,  
 This cries there is, and that, there is no God.  
 What shocks one part will edify the rest,  
 Nor with one system can they all be blest.  
 The very best will variously incline,  
 And what rewards your Virtue, punish mine.  
 WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT.—This world, 'tis true,  
 Was made for Cæsar—but for Titus too:  
 And which more blest? who chain'd his country, say,  
 Or he whose Virtue sigh'd to lose a day?

‘But sometimes Virtue starves, while Vice is fed.’  
 What then? Is the reward of Virtue bread?  
 That, Vice may merit, 'tis the price of toil;  
 The knave deserves it, when he tills the soil,  
 The knave deserves it, when he tempts the main,  
 Where Folly fights for kings, or dives for gain.  
 The good man may be weak, be indolent;  
 Nor is his claim to plenty, but content.  
 But grant him Riches, your demand is o'er?  
 ‘No—shall the good want Health, the good want  
 Pow'r?’

Add Health, and Pow'r, and ev'ry earthly thing,  
 ‘Why bounded Pow'r? why private? why no king?’  
 Nay, why external for internal giv'n?  
 Why is not Man a God, and Earth a Heav'n?  
 Who ask and reason thus, will scarce conceive  
 God gives enough, while he has more to give:  
 Immense the pow'r, immense were the demand;  
 Say, at what part of nature will they stand?

What nothing earthly gives, or can destroy,  
 The soul's calm sunshine, and the heart-felt joy,

Is Virtue's prize: A better would you fix?  
 Then give humility a coach and six,  
 Justice a Conq'ror's sword, or Truth a gown,  
 Or Public Spirit its great cure, a Crown.  
 Weak, foolish man! will Heav'n reward us there  
 With the same trash mad mortals wish for here?  
 The Boy and Man an individual makes,  
 Yet sigh'st thou now for apples and for cakes?  
 Go, like the Indian, in another life  
 Expect thy dog, thy bottle, and thy wife:  
 As well as dream such trifles are assign'd,  
 As toys and empires, for a god-like mind.  
 Rewards, that either would to Virtue bring  
 No joy, or be destructive of the thing:  
 How oft by these at sixty are undone  
 The Virtues of a saint at twenty-one!  
 To whom can Riches give Repute, or Trust,  
 Content, or Pleasure, but the Good and Just?  
 Judges and Senates have been bought for gold,  
 Esteem and Love were never to be sold.  
 Oh fool! to think God hates the worthy mind,  
 The lover and the love of human-kind,  
 Whose life is healthful, and whose conscience clear,  
 Because he wants a thousand pounds a year.

Honour and shame from no Condition rise;  
 Act well your part, there all the honour lies.  
 Fortune in Men has some small diff'rence made,  
 One flaunts in rags, one flutters in brocade;  
 The cobbler apron'd, the parson gown'd,  
 The friar hooded, and the monarch crown'd.  
 'What differ more (you cry) than crown and cowl?'  
 I'll tell you, friend! a wise man and a Fool.  
 You'll find, if once the monarch acts the monk,  
 Or, cobbler-like, the parson will be drunk,

Worth makes the man, and want of it, the fellow;  
The rest is all but leather or prunella.<sup>1</sup>

Stuck o'er with titles and hung round with strings,  
That thou may'st be by kings, or whores of kings.  
Boast the pure blood of an illustrious race,  
In quiet flow from Lucrece to Lucrece:  
But by your fathers' worth if yours you rate,  
Count me those only who were good and great.  
Go! if your ancient, but ignoble blood  
Has crept thro' scoundrels ever since the flood,  
Go! and pretend your family is young;  
Nor own, your fathers have been fools so long.  
What can ennoble sots, or slaves, or cowards?  
Alas! not all the blood of all the HOWARDS.

Look next on Greatness; say where Greatness lies?  
'Where, but among the Heroes and the wise?'  
Heroes are much the same, the point's agreed,  
From Macedonia's madman to the Swede;  
The whole strange purpose of their lives, to find  
Or make, an enemy of all mankind!  
Not one looks backward, onward still he goes,  
Yet ne'er looks forward farther than his nose.  
No less alike the Politic and Wise;  
All sly slow things, with circumspective eyes:  
Men in their loose unguarded hours they take,  
Not that themselves are wise, but others weak.  
But grant that those can conquer, these can cheat;  
'Tis phrase absurd to call a Villain Great:  
Who wickedly is wise, or madly brave,  
Is but the more a fool, the more a knave.  
Who noble ends by noble means obtains,  
Or failing, smiles in exile or in chains,  
Like good Aurelius let him reign, or bleed

<sup>1</sup>Clerical gowns were often made of prunella.

---

Like Socrates, that Man is great indeed.

What's Fame? a fancy'd life in others' breath,  
A thing beyond us, ev'n before our death.  
Just what you hear, you have, and what's unknown  
The same (my Lord) if Tully's, or your own.  
All that we feel of it begins and ends  
In the small circle of our foes or friends;  
To all beside as much an empty shade  
An Eugene living, as a Cæsar dead;  
Alike or when, or where, they shone, or shine,  
Or on the Rubicon, or on the Rhine.  
A Wit's a feather, and a Chief a rod;  
An honest Man's the noblest work of God.  
Fame but from death a villain's name can save,  
As Justice tears his body from the grave;  
When what t' oblivion better were resign'd,  
Is hung on high, to poison half mankind.  
All fame is foreign, but of true desert;  
Plays round the head, but comes not to the heart:  
One self-approving hour whole years out-weighs  
Of stupid starers, and of loud huzzas;  
And more true joy Marcellus exil'd feels,  
Than Cæsar with a senate at his heels.

In Parts superior what advantage lies?  
Tell (for You can) what is it to be wise?  
'Tis but to know how little can be known;  
To see all others' faults, and feel our own:  
Condemn'd in bus'ness or in arts to drudge,  
Without a second, or without a judge:  
Truths would you teach, or save a sinking land  
All fear, none aid you, and few understand.  
Painful pre-eminence! yourself to view  
Above life's weakness, and its comforts too.

Bring then these blessings to a strict account;

Make fair deductions; see to what they mount:  
How much of other each is sure to cost;  
How each for other oft is wholly lost;  
How inconsistent greater goods with these;  
How sometimes life is risk'd, and always ease:  
Think, and if still the things thy envy call,  
Say, would'st thou be the Man to whom they fall?  
To sigh for ribbands if thou art so silly,  
Mark how they grace Lord Umbra,<sup>1</sup> or Sir Billy:<sup>2</sup>  
Is yellow dirt the passion of thy life?  
Look but on Gripus, or on Gripus' wife:  
If Parts allure thee, think how Bacon shin'd,  
The wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind:  
Or ravish'd with the whistling of a Name,  
See Cromwell, damn'd to everlasting fame!  
If all, united, thy ambition call,  
From ancient story learn to scorn them all.  
There, in the rich, the honour'd, fam'd, and great,  
See the false scale of Happiness complete!  
In hearts of Kings, or arms of Queens who lay,  
How happy! those to ruin, these betray.  
Mark by what wretched steps their glory grows,  
From dirt and sea-weed as proud Venice rose;  
In each how guilt and greatness equal ran,  
And all that rais'd the Hero, sunk the Man:  
Now Europe's laurels on their brows behold,  
But stain'd with blood, or ill exchang'd for gold:  
Then see them broke with toils, or sunk in ease,  
Or infamous for plunder'd provinces.  
Oh wealth ill-fated! which no act of fame  
E'er taught to shine, or sanctify'd from shame!

<sup>1</sup>Bubb Doddington, favourite and butt of Frederick Prince of Wales.

<sup>2</sup>Sir William Yonge, a supporter of Pope's old enemy, Sir Robert Walpole

What greater bliss attends their close of life?  
 Some greedy minion, or imperious wife.  
 The trophy'd arches, story'd halls invade  
 And haunt their slumbers in the pompous shade.  
 Alas! not dazzled with their noon-tide ray,  
 Compute the morn and ev'ning to the day;  
 The whole amount of that enormous fame,  
 A Tale, that blends their glory with their shame!  
 Know then this truth (enough for Man to know)  
 'Virtue alone is Happiness below'.

The only point where human bliss stands still,  
 And tastes the good without the fall to ill;  
 Where only Merit constant pay receives,  
 Is blest in what it takes, and what it gives;  
 The joy unequall'd, if its end it gain,  
 And if it lose, attended with no pain:  
 Without satiety, tho' e'er so bless'd,  
 And but more relish'd as the more distress'd:  
 The broadest mirth unfeeling Folly wears,  
 Less pleasing far than Virtue's very tears:  
 Good, from each object, from each place acquir'd,  
 For ever exercis'd, yet never tir'd;  
 Never elated, while one man's oppress'd;  
 Never dejected, while another's bless'd;  
 And where no wants, no wishes can remain,  
 Since be to wish more Virtue, is to gain.

See the sole bliss Heav'n could on all bestow!  
 Which who but feels can taste, but thinks can know:  
 Yet poor with fortune, and with learning blind,  
 The bad must miss; the good, untaught, will find;  
 Slave to no sect, who takes no private road,  
 But looks thro' Nature up to Nature's God;  
 Pursues that Chain which links th' immense design,  
 Joins heav'n and earth, and mortal and divine;

Sees, that no Being any bliss can know,  
 But touches some above, and some below;  
 Learns, from this union of the rising Whole,  
 The first, last purpose of the human soul;  
 And knows, where Faith, Law, Morals, all began,  
 All end, in LOVE OF GOD, and LOVE OF MAN.

For him alone, Hope leads from goal to goal,  
 And opens still, and opens on his soul;  
 'Till lengthen'd on to Faith, and unconfi'd,  
 It pours the bliss that fills up all the mind.  
 He sees, why Nature plants in Man alone  
 Hope of known bliss, and Faith in bliss unknown:  
 (Nature, whose dictates to no other kind  
 Are giv'n in vain, but what they seek they find)  
 Wise is her present; she connects in this  
 His greatest Virtue with his greatest Bliss;  
 At once his own bright prospect to be blest,  
 And strongest motive to assist the rest.

Self-love thus push'd to social, to divine,  
 Gives thee to make thy neighbour's blessing thine.  
 Is this too little for the boundless heart?  
 Extend it, let thy enemies have part:  
 Grasp the whole worlds of Reason, Life, and Sense,  
 In one close system of Benevolence:  
 Happier as kinder, in whate'er degree,  
 And height of Bliss but height of Charity.

God loves from Whole to Parts: but human soul  
 Must rise from Individual to the Whole.  
 Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,  
 As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake;  
 The centre mov'd, a circle straight succeeds,  
 Another still, and still another spreads;  
 Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace;  
 His country next; and next all human race;

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Wide and more wide, th' o'erflowings of the mind  
Take ev'ry creature in, of ev'ry kind;  
Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty blest,  
And Heav'n beholds its image in his breast.

Come then, my Friend! my Genius! come along;  
Oh master of the poet, and the song!  
And while the Muse now stoops, or now ascends,  
To Man's low passions, or their glorious ends,  
Teach me, like thee, in various nature wise,  
To fall with dignity, with temper rise;  
Form'd by thy converse, happily to steer  
From grave to gay, from lively to severe;  
Correct with spirit, eloquent with ease,  
Intent to reason, or polite to please.  
Oh! while along the stream of Time thy name  
Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame,  
Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,  
Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale?  
When statesmen, heroes, kings, in dust repose,  
Whose sons shall blush their fathers were thy foes,  
Shall then this verse to future age pretend  
Thou wert my guide, philosopher, and friend?  
That urg'd by thee, I turn'd the tuneful art  
From sounds to things, from fancy to the heart;  
For Wit's false mirror held up Nature's light;  
Shew'd erring Pride, WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT;  
That REASON, PASSION, answer one great aim;  
That true SELF-LOVE and SOCIAL are the same;  
That VIRTUE only makes our Bliss below;  
And all our Knowledge is, OURSELVES TO KNOW.



## MORAL ESSAYS

Est brevitæ opus, ut currat sententiâ, neu se  
Impediat verbis lassissimantibus aures:  
Et sermone opus est modo tristi, sæpe jocosò,  
Defendente vicem modo Rhetoris atque Poetæ,  
Interdum urbani, parentis viribus, atque  
Extenuantis eas consulto.

HOR. [*Sat* I. x 17-22.]

### EPISTLE I

TO

SIR RICHARD TEMPLE, LORD COBHAM

*Of the Knowledge and Characters  
of MEN*

YES, you despise the man to Books confin'd,  
Who from his study rails at human kind;  
Tho' what he learns he speaks, and may advance  
Some gen'ral maxims, or be right by chance.  
The coxcomb bird, so talkative and grave,  
That from his cage cries Cuckold, Whore, and Knave,  
Tho' many a passenger he rightly call,  
You hold him no Philosopher at all.

And yet the fate of all extremes is such,  
Men may be read as well as Books, too much.  
To observations which ourselves we make,  
We grow more partial for th' Observer's sake;  
To written Wisdom, as another's, less:  
Maxims are drawn from Notions, those from Guess.  
There's some Peculiar in each leaf and grain,  
Some unmark'd fibre, or some varying vein:  
Shall only Man be taken in the gross?  
Grant but as many sorts of Mind as Moss.

That each from other differs, first confess;  
Next, that he varies from himself no less:

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Add Nature's, Custom's, Reason's, Passion's strife,  
And all Opinion's colours cast on life.

Our depths who fathoms, or our shallows finds,  
Quick whirls, and shifting eddies, of our minds?  
On human actions reason tho' you can,  
It may be Reason, but it is not Man:  
His Principle of action once explore,  
That instant 'tis his Principle no more.  
Like following life thro' creatures you dissect,  
You lose it in the moment you detect.

Yet more; the diff'rence is as great between  
The optics seeing, as the object seen.  
All Manners take a tincture from our own;  
Or come discolour'd thro' our Passions shown.  
Or Fancy's beam enlarges, multiplies,  
Contracts, inverts, and gives ten thousand dyes.

Nor will Life's stream for Observation stay,  
It hurries all too fast to mark their way:  
In vain sedate reflections we would make,  
When half our knowledge we must snatch, not  
take.

Oft, in the Passions' wild rotation tost,  
Our spring of action to ourselves is lost:  
Tir'd, not determin'd, to the last we yield,  
And what comes then is master of the field.  
As the last image of that troubled heap,  
When Sense subsides, and Fancy sports in sleep,  
(Tho' past the recollection of the thought,)  
Becomes the stuff of which our dream is wrought:  
Something as dim to our internal view,  
Is thus, perhaps, the cause of most we do.

True, some are open, and to all men known;  
Others so very close, they're hid from none;  
(So Darkness strikes the sense no less than Light)

Thus gracious CHANDOS<sup>1</sup> is belov'd at sight;  
 And ev'ry child hates Shylock, tho' his soul  
 Still sits at squat, and peeps not from its hole.  
 At half mankind when gen'rous Manly raves,<sup>2</sup>  
 All know 'tis Virtue, for he thinks them knaves:  
 When universal homage Umbra pays,<sup>3</sup>  
 All see 'tis Vice, and itch the vulgar praise.  
 When Flatt'ry glares, all hate it in a Queen,<sup>4</sup>  
 While one there is who charms us with his Spleen.

But these plain Characters we rarely find;  
 Tho' strong the bent, yet quick the turns of mind:  
 Or puzzling Contraries confound the whole;  
 Or Affectations quite reverse the soul.  
 The Dull, flat Falsehood serves for policy;  
 And in the Cunning, Truth itself's a lie:  
 Unthought-of Fraillies cheat us in the Wise;  
 The Fool lies hid in inconsistencies.

See the same man, in vigour, in the gout;  
 Alone, in company; in place, or out;  
 Early at Bus'ness, and at Hazard late;  
 Mad at a Fox-chase, wise at a Debate;  
 Drunk at a Borough, civil at a Ball;  
 Friendly at Hackney, faithless at Whitehall.

Catius is ever moral, ever grave,  
 Thinks who endures a knave, is next a knave,  
 Save just at dinner—then, prefers, no doubt,  
 A Rogue with Ven'son to a Saint without.

Who would not praise Patritio's high desert,<sup>5</sup>  
 His hand unstain'd, his uncorrupted heart,  
 His comprehensive head! all Int'rests weigh'd,

<sup>1</sup>The 'Princely' Duke of Chandos: in Epistle IV satirized by Pope as the magnificent master of Canons.

<sup>2</sup>The hero of Wycherley's *Plain Dealer*. \*Bubb Doddington.

<sup>4</sup>This line presumably refers to Queen Caroline, wife of George II.

<sup>5</sup>Lord Godolphin.

All Europe sav'd, yet Britain not betray'd.  
 He thanks you not, his pride is in Piquet,  
 New-market-fame, and judgment at a Bet.

What made (say Montagne, or more sage Charron!)  
 Otho a warrior, Cromwell a buffoon?  
 A perjur'd Prince a leaden Saint revere,<sup>1</sup>  
 A godless Regent tremble at a Star?<sup>2</sup>  
 The throne a Bigot keep, a Genius quit,<sup>3</sup>  
 Faithless thro' Piety, and dup'd thro' Wit?  
 Europe a Woman, Child, or Dotard rule,  
 And just her wisest monarch made a fool?<sup>4</sup>

Know, GOD and NATURE only are the same:  
 In Man, the judgment shoots at flying game,  
 A bird of passage! gone as soon as found,  
 Now in the Moon perhaps, now under ground.

In vain the Sage, with retrospective eye,  
 Would from th' apparent What conclude the Why,  
 Infer the Motive from the Deed, and shew,  
 That what we chanc'd was what we meant to do.  
 Behold! If Fortune or a Mistress frowns,  
 Some plunge in bus'ness, others shave their crowns:  
 To ease the Soul of one oppressive weight,  
 This quits an Empire, that embroils a State:  
 The same adust complexion has impell'd  
 Charles to the Convent, Philip to the Field.<sup>5</sup>

Not always Actions shew the man: we find  
 Who does a kindness, is not therefore kind;  
 Perhaps Prosperity becalm'd his breast,

<sup>1</sup>Louis XI of France.

<sup>2</sup>The Regent d'Orléans was an atheist as regards religion, but a believer in astrology.

<sup>3</sup>The bigot is Philip V of Spain: the genius, Victor Amadeus II of Sardinia.

<sup>4</sup>Commentators have failed satisfactorily to elucidate the historical references contained in this passage.

<sup>5</sup>Charles V and his son Philip II.

Perhaps the Wind just shifted from the east:  
 Not therefore humble he who seeks retreat,  
 Pride guides his steps, and bids him shun the great:  
 Who combats bravely is not therefore brave,  
 He dreads a death-bed like the meanest slave:  
 Who reasons wisely is not therefore wise,  
 His pride in Reas'ning, not in Acting lies.

But grant that Actions best discover man;  
 Take the most strong, and sort them as you can.  
 The few that glare each character must mark,  
 You balance not the many in the dark.  
 What will you do with such as disagree?  
 Suppress them, or miscall them Policy?  
 Must then at once (the character to save)  
 The plain rough Hero turn a crafty Knave?  
 Alas! in truth the man but chang'd his mind,  
 Perhaps was sick, in love, or had not din'd.  
 Ask why from Britain Cæsar would retreat?  
 Cæsar himself might whisper he was beat.  
 Why risk the world's great empire for a Punk?  
 Cæsar perhaps might answer he was drunk.  
 But, sage historians! 'tis your task to prove  
 One action Conduct; one, heroic Love.

'Tis from high Life high Characters are drawn;  
 A Saint in Crape<sup>1</sup> is twice a Saint in Lawn;  
 A Judge is just, a Chanc'llor juster still;  
 A Gownman, learn'd; a Bishop, what you will;  
 Wise, if a Minister; but, if a King,  
 More wise, more learn'd, more just, more ev'rything.  
 Court-virtues bear, like Gems, the highest rate,  
 Born where Heav'n's influence scarce can penetrate:

<sup>1</sup>The material of the parson's gown.

In life's low vale, the soil the Virtues like,  
 They please as beauties, here as wonders strike.  
 Tho' the same Sun with all-diffusive rays  
 Blush in the Rose, and in the Di'mond blaze,  
 We prize the stronger effort of his pow'r,  
 And justly set the Gem above the Flow'r.

'Tis Education forms the common mind,  
 Just as the Twig is bent, the Tree's inclin'd.  
 Boastful and rough, your first Son is a Squire;  
 The next a Tradesman, meek, and much a liar;  
 Tom struts a Soldier, open, bold, and brave;  
 Will sneaks a Scriv'ner, an exceeding knave:  
 Is he a Churchman? then he's fond of pow'r: }  
 A Quaker? sly: A Presbyterian? sour: }  
 A smart Free-thinker? all things in an hour. }

Ask men's Opinions: Scoto now shall tell  
 How Trade increases, and the World goes well;  
 Strike off his Pension, by the setting sun,  
 And Britain, if not Europe, is undone.

That gay Free-thinker, a fine talker once,  
 What turns him now a stupid silent dunce?  
 Some God, or Spirit he has lately found:  
 Or chanc'd to meet a Minister that frown'd.

Judge we by Nature? Habit can efface,  
 Int'rest o'ercome, or Policy take place:  
 By Actions? those Uncertainty divides:  
 By Passions? these Dissimulation hides:  
 Opinions? they still take a wider range:  
 Find, if you can, in what you cannot change.

Manners with Fortunes, Humours turn with Climes,  
 Tenets with Books, and Principles with Times.

Search then the RULING PASSION: there, alone,  
 The Wild are constant, and the Cunning known;

The Fool consistent, and the False sincere;  
 Priests, Princes, Women, no dissemblers here.  
 This clue once found, unravels all the rest,  
 The prospect clears, and Wharton stands confest.<sup>1</sup>  
 Wharton, the scorn and wonder of our days,  
 Whose ruling Passion was the Lust of Praise:  
 Born with whate'er could win it from the Wise,  
 Women and Fools must like him or he dies;  
 Tho' wond'ring Senates hung on all he spoke,  
 The Club must hail him master of the joke.  
 Shall parts so various aim at nothing new?<sup>2</sup>  
 He'll shine a Tully and a Wilmot too.<sup>3</sup>  
 Then turns repentant, and his God adores  
 With the same spirit that he drinks and whores;  
 Enough if all around him but admire,  
 And now the Punk applaud, and now the Friar.  
 Thus with each gift of nature and of art,  
 And wanting nothing but an honest heart;  
 Grown all to all, from no one vice exempt;  
 And most contemptible, to shun contempt:  
 His Passion still, to covet gen'ral praise,  
 His Life,\* to forfeit it a thousand ways;  
 A constant Bounty which no friend has made;  
 An angel Tongue, which no man can persuade;  
 A Fool, with more of Wit than half mankind,  
 Too rash for Thought, for Action too refin'd:  
 A Tyrant to the wife his heart approves;  
 A Rebel to the very king he loves;  
 He dies, sad outcast of each church and state,  
 And, harder still! flagitious, yet not great.  
 Ask you why Wharton broke thro' ev'ry rule?  
 'Twas all for fear the Knaves should call him Fool.

<sup>1</sup> Philip, Duke of Wharton, who after an existence of wild dissipation died in a Spanish convent.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Rochester, poet and profligate.

Nature well known, no prodigies remain,  
Comets are regular, and Wharton plain.

Yet, in this search, the wisest may mistake,  
If second qualities for first they take.  
When Catiline by rapine swell'd his store;  
When Cæsar made a noble dame a whore;  
In this the Lust, in that the Avarice  
Were means, not ends; Ambition was the vice.  
That very Cæsar, born in Scipio's days,  
Had aim'd, like him, by Chastity at praise.  
Lucullus, when Frugality could charm,  
Had roasted turnips in the Sabine farm.

In vain th' observer eyes the builder's toil,  
But quite mistakes the scaffold for the pile.  
In this one Passion man can strength enjoy,  
As Fits give vigour, just when they destroy.  
Time, that on all things lays his lenient hand,  
Yet tames not this; it sticks to our last sand.  
Consistent in our follies and our sins,  
Here honest Nature ends as she begins.

Old Politicians chew on wisdom past,  
And totter on in bus'ness to the last;  
As weak, as earnest; and as gravely out,  
As sober Lanesb'row<sup>1</sup> dancing in the gout.

Behold a rev'rend sire, whom want of grace  
Has made the father of a nameless race,  
Shov'd from the wall perhaps, or rudely press'd  
By his own son, that passes by unblest:  
Still to his wench he crawls on knocking knees,  
And envies ev'ry sparrow that he sees.

A salmon's belly, Helluo, was thy fate;

<sup>1</sup>Lord Lanesborough, 'an ancient Nobleman (according to Pope's footnote) who continued this practice long after his legs were disabled by the gout'.



The doctor call'd, declares all help too late:

'Mercy!' cries Helluo, 'mercy on my soul!'

'Is there no hope?'—Alas!—then bring the jowl.'

The frugal Crone, whom praying priests attend,

Still tries to save the hallow'd taper's end,

Collects her breath, as ebbing life retires,

For one puff more, and in that puff expires.

'Odious! in woollen! 'twould a Saint provoke,'

(Were the last words that poor Narcissa spoke)<sup>1</sup>

'No, let a charming Chintz, and Brussels lace

'Wrap my cold limbs, and shade my lifeless face:

'One would not, sure, be frightful when one's dead—

'And—Betty—give his Cheek a little Red.'

The Courtier smooth, who forty years had shin'd

An humble servant to all human kind,

Just brought out this, when scarce his tongue could  
stir,

'If—where I'm going—I could serve you, Sir?'

'I give and I devise (old Euclio said,

And sigh'd) 'my lands and tenements to Ned.'

'Your money, Sir;' 'My money, Sir, what all?

'Why,—if I must—(then wept) I give it Paul.'

'The Manor, Sir?'—'The Manor! hold,' he cry'd,

'Not that,—I cannot part with that'—and died.

And you! brave COBHAM, to the latest breath

Shall feel your ruling passion strong in death:

Such in those moments as in all the past,

'Oh, save my Country, Heav'n!' shall be your last.

<sup>1</sup>Pope is said to refer to the last request of Mrs. Oldfield, the celebrated actress

## EPISTLE II

TO A LADY<sup>1</sup>*Of the Characters of WOMEN*

NOTHING so true as what you once let fall,  
 'Most Women have no Characters at all.'  
 Matter too soft a lasting mark to bear,  
 And best distinguish'd by black, brown, or fair.

How many pictures of one Nymph we view,  
 All how unlike each other, all how true!  
 Arcadia's Countess, here, in ermin'd pride,  
 Is, there, Pastora by a fountain side.  
 Here Fannia, leering on her own good man,  
 And there, a naked Leda with a Swan.  
 Let then the Fair one beautifully cry,  
 In Magdalen's loose hair, and lifted eye,  
 Or drest in smiles of sweet Cecilia shine,  
 With simp'ring Angels, Palms, and Harps divine;  
 Whether the Charmer sinner it, or saint it,  
 If Folly grow romantic, I must paint it.

Come then, the colours and the ground prepare!  
 Dip in the Rainbow, trick her off in Air;  
 Choose a firm Cloud, before it fall, and in it  
 Catch, ere she change, the Cynthia of this minute.

Rufa, whose eye quick-glancing o'er the Park,  
 Attracts each light gay meteor of a Spark,  
 Agrees as ill with Rufa studying Locke,  
 As Sappho's di'monds with her dirty smock;<sup>2</sup>  
 Or Sappho at her toilet's greasy task,  
 With Sappho fragrant at an ev'ning Masque:  
 So morning Insects that in muck begun,  
 Shine, buzz, and fly-blow in the setting sun.

<sup>1</sup>Pope's dedicatee is generally assumed to have been his friend Martha Blount.

<sup>2</sup>Lady Mary Wortley Montagu.

How soft is Silia! fearful to offend;  
 The Frail one's advocate, the Weak one's friend:  
 To her, Calista prov'd her conduct nice;  
 And good Simplicius asks of her advice.  
 Sudden, she storms! she raves! You tip the wink,  
 But spare your censure; Silia does not drink.  
 All eyes may see from what the change arose,  
 All eyes may see—a Pimple on her nose.

Papillia, wedded to her am'rous spark,  
 Sighs for the shades—'How charming is a Park!'  
 A Park is purchas'd, but the Fair he sees  
 All bath'd in tears—'Oh odious, odious Trees!'

Ladies, like variegated Tulips, show;  
 'Tis to their Changes half their charms we owe;  
 Fine by defect, and delicately weak,  
 Their happy Spots the nice admirer take,  
 'Twas thus Calypso once each heart alarm'd,  
 Aw'd without Virtue, without Beauty charm'd;  
 Her Tongue bewitch'd as oddly as her Eyes,  
 Less Wit than Mimic, more a Wit than wise;  
 Strange graces still, and stranger flights she had,  
 Was just not ugly, and was just not mad;  
 Yet ne'er so sure our passion to create,  
 As when she touch'd the brink of all we hate.

Narcissa's<sup>1</sup> nature, tolerably mild,  
 To make a wash, would hardly stew a child;  
 Has ev'n been prov'd to grant a Lover's pray'r,  
 And paid a Tradesman once to make him stare;  
 Gave alms at Easter, in a Christian trim,  
 And made a Widow happy, for a whim.  
 Why then declare Good-nature is her scorn,  
 When 'tis by that alone she can be borne?  
 Why pique all mortals, yet affect a name?

<sup>1</sup>The Duchess of Hamilton is said to have been intended.

A fool to Pleasure, yet a slave to Fame:  
 Now deep in Taylor and the Book of Martyrs,  
 Now drinking citron with his Grace and Chartres:<sup>1</sup>  
 Now Conscience chills her, and now Passion burns;  
 And Atheism and Religion take their turns;  
 A very Heathen in the carnal part,  
 Yet still a sad, good Christian at her heart.

See Sin in State, majestically drunk;  
 Proud as a Peeress, prouder as a Punk;  
 Chaste to her Husband, frank to all beside,  
 A teeming Mistress, but a barren Bride.  
 What then? let Blood and Body bear the fault,  
 Her Head's untouch'd, that noble Seat of Thought.  
 Such this day's doctrine—in another fit  
 She sins with Poets thro' pure Love of Wit.  
 What has not fir'd her bosom or her brain?  
 Cæsar and Tall-boy, Charles and Charlemagne.  
 As Helluo, late Dictator of the Feast,  
 The Nose of Hautgout, and the Tip of Taste,  
 Critic'd your wine, and analys'd your meat,  
 Yet on plain Pudding deign'd at home to eat;  
 So Philomede,<sup>2</sup> lect'ring all mankind  
 On the soft Passion, and the Taste refin'd,  
 Th' Address, the Delicacy—stoops at once,  
 And makes her hearty meal upon a Dunce.

Flavia's a Wit, has too much sense to Pray;  
 To Toast our wants and wishes, is her way;  
 Nor asks of God, but of her Stars, to give  
 The mighty blessing, 'while we live, to live'.  
 Then all for Death, that Opiate of the soul!

<sup>1</sup>Colonel Chartres, the most notorious libertine of his day, into whose grave, at his funeral, the scandalized populace flung dead dogs.

<sup>2</sup>Henrietta, Duchess of Marlborough, daughter of the more famous Sarah, and the devoted friend of Congreve.

Lucretia's dagger, Rosamonda's bowl.  
 Say, what can cause such impotence of mind?  
 A Spark too fickle, or a Spouse too kind.  
 Wise Wretch! with Pleasures too refin'd to please;  
 With too much Spirit to be e'er at ease;  
 With too much Quickness ever to be taught;  
 With too much Thinking to have common Thought:  
 You purchase Pain with all that Joy can give,  
 And die of nothing but a Rage to live.

Turn then from Wits; and look on Simo's Mate,  
 No Ass so meek, no Ass so obstinate.  
 Or her, that owns her Faults, but never mends,  
 Because she's honest, and the best of Friends.  
 Or her, whose life the Church and Scandal share,  
 For ever in a Passion, or a Pray'r.  
 Or her, who laughs at Hell, but (like her Grace)<sup>1</sup>  
 Cries, 'Ah! how charming, if there's no such place!'  
 Or who in sweet vicissitude appears  
 Of Mirth and Opium, Ratafie<sup>2</sup> and Tears,  
 The daily Anodyne, and nightly Draught,  
 To kill those foes to Fair ones, Time and Thought.  
 Woman and Fool are two hard things to hit;  
 For true No-meaning puzzles more than Wit.

But what are these to great Atossa's mind?<sup>3</sup>  
 Scarce once herself, by turns all Womankind!  
 Who, with herself, or others, from her birth  
 Finds all her life one warfare upon earth:  
 Shines in exposing Knaves, and painting Fools,  
 Yet is, whate'er she hates and ridicules.  
 No Thought advances, but her Eddy Brain  
 Whisks it about, and down it goes again.  
 Full sixty years the World has been her Trade,

<sup>1</sup>The Duchess of Montagu.

<sup>2</sup>A liqueur    <sup>3</sup>Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough.

The wisest Fool much Time has ever made.  
 From loveless youth to unrespected age,  
 No Passion gratify'd except her Rage.  
 So much the Fury still out-ran the Wit,  
 The Pleasure miss'd her, and the Scandal hit.  
 Who breaks with her, provokes Revenge from Hell,  
 But he's a bolder man who dares be well.  
 Her ev'ry turn with Violence pursu'd,  
 Nor more a storm her Hate than Gratitude:  
 To that each Passion turns, or soon or late;  
 Love, if it makes her yield, must make her hate:  
 Superiors? death! and Equals? what a curse!  
 But an Inferior not dependant? worse.  
 Offend her, and she knows not to forgive;  
 Oblige her, and she'll hate you while you live:  
 But die, and she'll adore you—Then the Bust  
 And Temple rise—then fall again to dust.  
 Last night, her Lord was all that's good and great;  
 A Knave this morning, and his Will a Cheat.  
 Strange! by the Means defeated of the Ends,  
 By Spirit robb'd of Pow'r, by Warmth of Friends,  
 By Wealth of Follow'rs! without one distress  
 Sick of herself thro' very selfishness!  
 Atossa, curs'd with ev'ry granted pray'r,  
 Childless with all her Children, wants an Heir.  
 To Heirs unknown descends th' unguarded store,  
 Or wanders, Heav'n-directed, to the Poor.

Pictures like these, dear Madam, to design,  
 Asks no firm hand, and no unerring line;  
 Some wand'ring touches, some reflected light,  
 Some flying stroke alone can hit 'em right:  
 For how should equal Colours do the knack?  
 Chameleons who can paint in white and black?

'Yet Chloe<sup>1</sup> sure was form'd without a spot'—  
 Nature in her then err'd not, but forgot.  
 'With ev'ry pleasing, ev'ry prudent part,  
 Say, what can Chloe want?'—She wants a Heart.  
 She speaks, behaves, and acts just as she ought;  
 But never, never, reach'd one gen'rous Thought.  
 Virtue she finds too painful an endeavour,  
 Content to dwell in Decencies for ever.  
 So very reasonable, so unmov'd,  
 As never yet to love, or to be lov'd.  
 She, while her Lover pants upon her breast,  
 Can mark the figures on an Indian chest;  
 And when she sees her Friend in deep despair,  
 Observes how much a Chintz exceeds Mohair.  
 Forbid it Heav'n, a Favour or a Debt  
 She e'er should cancel—but she may forget.  
 Safe is your Secret still in Chloe's ear;  
 But none of Chloe's shall you ever hear.  
 Of all her Dears she never slander'd one,  
 But cares not if a thousand are undone.  
 Would Chloe know if you're alive or dead?  
 She bids her Footman put it in her head.  
 Chloe is prudent—Would you too be wise?  
 Then never break your heart when Chloe dies.

One certain Portrait may (I grant) be seen,  
 Which Heav'n has varnish'd out, and made a *Queen*:  
 THE SAME FOR EVER! and describ'd by all  
 With Truth and Goodness, as with Crown and Ball.  
 Poets heap Virtues, Painters Gems at will,  
 And shew their zeal, and hide their want of skill.  
 'Tis well—but, Artists! who can paint or write,  
 To draw the Naked is your true delight.

<sup>1</sup>Lady Suffolk, mistress of George II and friend of Swift, Pope and Gay.

That robe of Quality so struts and swells,  
 None see what Parts of Nature it conceals.  
 Th' exactest traits of Body or of Mind,  
 We owe to models of an humble kind.  
 If QUEENSBURY<sup>1</sup> to strip there's no compelling,  
 'Tis from a Handmaid we must take a Helen,  
 From Peer or Bishop 'tis no easy thing  
 To draw the man who loves his God, or King:  
 Alas! I copy (or my draught would fail)  
 From honest Mah'met,<sup>2</sup> or plain Parson Hale.<sup>3</sup>

But grant, in Public Men sometimes are shown,  
 A Woman's seen in Private life alone:  
 Our bolder Talents in full light display'd;  
 Your virtues open fairest in the shade.  
 Bred to disguise, in Public 'tis you hide;  
 There, none distinguish 'twixt your Shame or Pride,  
 Weakness or Delicacy; all so nice,  
 That each may seem a Virtue, or a Vice.

In Men, we various Ruling Passions find;  
 In Women, two almost divide the kind;  
 Those, only fix'd, they first or last obey,  
 The Love of Pleasure, and the Love of Sway.

That, Nature gives; and where the lesson taught  
 Is but to please, can Pleasure seem a fault?  
 Experience, this; by Man's oppression curst,  
 They seek the second not to lose the first.

Men, some to Bus'ness, some to Pleasure take;  
 But every Woman is at heart a Rake:  
 Men, some to Quiet, some to public Strife;  
 But ev'ry Lady would be Queen for life.

Yet mark the fate of a whole Sex of Queens!

<sup>1</sup>The famous and beautiful Duchess of Queensbury.

<sup>2</sup>Mahomet, Turkish servant of George II.

<sup>3</sup>Dr. Stephen Hale, scientist and parish priest.



Pow'r all their end, but Beauty all the means:  
 In Youth they conquer, with so wild a rage,  
 As leaves them scarce a subject in their Age:  
 For foreign glory, foreign joy, they roam;  
 No thought of peace or happiness at home.  
 But Wisdom's triumph is well-tim'd Retreat,  
 As hard a science to the Fair as Great!  
 Beauties, like Tyrants, old and friendless grown,  
 Yet hate repose, and dread to be alone,  
 Worn out in public, weary ev'ry eye,  
 Nor leave one sigh behind them when they die.

Pleasures the sex, as children Birds, pursue,  
 Still out of reach, yet never out of view;  
 Sure, if they catch, to spoil the Toy at most,  
 To covet flying, and regret when lost:  
 At last, to follies Youth could scarce defend,  
 It grows their Age's prudence to pretend;  
 Asham'd to own they gave delight before,  
 Reduc'd to feign it, when they give no more:  
 As Hags hold Sabbaths, less for joy than spite,  
 So these their merry, miserable Night;  
 Still round and round the Ghosts of Beauty glide,  
 And haunt the places where their Honour died.

See how the World its Veterans rewards!  
 A Youth of Frolics, an old Age of Cards;  
 Fair to no purpose, artful to no end,  
 Young without Lovers, old without a Friend;  
 A Fop their Passion, but their Prize a Sot;  
 Alive, ridiculous, and dead, forgot!

Ah! Friend! to dazzle let the Vain design;  
 To raise the Thought, and touch the Heart be thine!  
 That Charm shall grow, while what fatigues the Ring,  
 Flaunts and goes down, an unregarded thing:  
 So when the Sun's broad beam has tir'd the sight,

---

All mild ascends the Moon's more sober light,  
Serene in Virgin Modesty she shines,  
And unobserv'd the glaring Orb declines.

Oh! blest with Temper, whose unclouded ray  
Can make to-morrow cheerful as to-day;  
She, who can love a Sister's charms, or hear  
Sighs for a daughter with unwounded ear;  
She, who ne'er answers till a Husband cools,  
Or, if she rules him, never shews she rules;  
Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,  
Yet has her humour most, when she obeys;  
Let Fops or Fortune fly which way they will;  
Disdains all loss of Tickets, or Codille:  
Spleen, Vapours, or Small-pox, above them all,  
And Mistress of herself, tho' China fall.

And yet, believe me, good as well as ill,  
Woman's at best a Contradiction still.  
Heav'n, when it strives to polish all it can  
Its last best work, but forms a softer Man;  
Picks from each sex, to make the Fav'rite blest,  
Your love of Pleasure, or desire of Rest:  
Blends, in exception to all gen'ral rules,  
Your Taste of Follies, with our Scorn of Fools:  
Reserve with Frankness, Art with Truth ally'd,  
Courage with Softness, Modesty with Pride;  
Fix'd Principles, with Fancy every new;  
Shakes all together, and produces—You.

Be this a Woman's Fame: with this unblest,  
Toasts live a scorn, and Queens may die a jest.  
This Phœbus promis'd (I forget the year)  
When those blue eyes first open'd on the sphere;  
Ascendant Phœbus watch'd that hour with care,  
Averted half your Parents' simple Pray'r;  
And gave you Beauty, but deny'd the Pelf

That buys your sex a Tyrant o'er itself.  
 The gen'rous God, who Wit and Gold refines,  
 And ripens Spirits as he ripens Mines,  
 Kept Dross for Duchesses, the world shall know it,  
 To you gave Sense, Good-humour, and a Poet.

## EPISTLE III

TO ALLEN LORD BATHURST

*Of the Use of RICHES*

P. WHO shall decide, when Doctors disagree,  
 And soundest Casuists doubt, like you and me?  
 You hold the word, from Jove to Momus giv'n  
 That Man was made the standing jest of Heav'n;  
 And Gold but sent to keep the fools in play,  
 For some to heap, and some to throw away.

But I, who think more highly of our kind,  
 (And surely, Heav'n and I are of a mind)  
 Opine, that Nature, as in duty bound,  
 Deep hid the shining mischief under ground:  
 But when by Man's audacious labour won,  
 Flam'd forth this rival to its Sire, the Sun,  
 Then careful Heav'n supply'd two sorts of Men,  
 To squander These, and Those to hide again.

Like Doctors thus, when much dispute has past,  
 We find our tenets just the same at last.  
 Both fairly owning Riches, in effect,  
 No grace of Heav'n or token of th' Elect;  
 Giv'n to the Fool, the Mad, the Vain, the Evil,  
 To Ward,<sup>1</sup> to Waters,<sup>2</sup> Chartres,<sup>3</sup> and the Devil.

<sup>1</sup>John Ward, a Member of Parliament, was convicted of forgery, expelled the House and sentenced to the pillory.

<sup>2</sup>As to Mr. Waters's precise offence, Pope, in his footnote (published, like the poem, during Waters's lifetime) remains discreetly reticent.

<sup>3</sup>For Colonel Chartres, see note on line 64, Epistle II.

*B.* What nature wants, commodious Gold bestows,  
'Tis thus we eat the bread another sows.

*P.* But how unequal it bestows, observe,  
'Tis thus we riot, while, who sow it, starve:  
What Nature wants (a phrase I much distrust)  
Extends to Luxury, extends to Lust:

Useful, I grant, it serves what life requires,  
But, dreadful too, the dark Assassin hires:

*B.* Trade it may help, Society extend.

*P.* But lures the Pirate, and corrupts the Friend.

*B.* It raises Armies in a Nation's aid.

*P.* But bribes a Senate, and the Land's betray'd.

In vain may Heroes fight, and Patriots rave;  
If secret Gold sap on from knave to knave.

Once, we confess, beneath the Patriot's cloak,<sup>1</sup>  
From the crack'd bag the dropping Guinea spoke,  
And jingling down the back-stairs, told the crew,  
'Old Cato is as great a Rogue as you'.

Blest paper-credit! last and best supply!  
That lends Corruption lighter wings to fly?  
Gold imp'd by thee, can compass hardest things,  
Can pocket States, can fetch or carry Kings;  
A single leaf shall waft an Army o'er,  
Or ship off Senates to a distant Shore;  
A leaf, like Sibyl's, scatter to and fro  
Our fates and fortunes, as the winds shall blow:  
Pregnant with thousands flits the Scrap unseen,  
And silent sells a King, or buys a Queen.

Oh! that such bulky Bribes as all might see,  
Still, as of old, encumber'd Villainy!  
Could France or Rome divert our brave designs,  
With all their brandies or with all their wines?

<sup>1</sup>Pope refers to an incident said to have occurred during the reign of William III, from whose closet the Patriot was emerging.

What could they more than Knights and Squires  
 confound,  
 Or water all the Quorum ten miles round?  
 A Statesman's slumbers how this speech would spoil!  
 'Sir, Spain has sent a thousand jars of oil;  
 'Huge bales of British cloth blockade the door;  
 'A hundred oxen at your levee roar.'  
 Poor Avarice one torment more would find;  
 Nor could Profusion squander all in kind.  
 Astride his cheese Sir Morgan might we meet;  
 And Worldly crying coals from street to street,  
 Whom with a wig so wild, and mien so maz'd,  
 Pity mistakes for some poor tradesman craz'd.  
 Had Colepepper's<sup>1</sup> whole wealth been hops and hogs,  
 Could he himself have sent it to the dogs?  
 His Grace will game: to White's a Bull be led,  
 With spurning heels and with a butting head.  
 To White's be carry'd, as to ancient games,  
 Fair Coursers, Vases, and alluring Dames.  
 Shall then Uxorio, if the stakes he sweep,  
 Bear home six Whores, and make his Lady weep?  
 Or soft Adonis, so perfum'd and fine,  
 Drive to St. James's a whole herd of swine?  
 Oh filthy check on all industrious skill,  
 To spoil the nation's last great trade, Quadrille!  
 Since then, my Lord, on such a World we fall,  
 What say you? *B.* Say? Why take it, Gold and all.  
*P.* What Riches give us let us then enquire:  
 Meat, Fire, and Clothes. *B.* What more? *P.* Meat,  
 Clothes, and Fire.  
 Is this too little? would you more than live?  
 Alas! 'tis more than Turner<sup>2</sup> finds they give.

<sup>1</sup>Sir William Colepepper, a ruined gambler.

<sup>2</sup>A miser who, after a financial reverse, never left his bedroom.

Alas! 'tis more than (all his Visions past)  
 Unhappy Wharton,<sup>1</sup> waking, found at last!  
 What can they give<sup>2</sup> to dying Hopkins,<sup>2</sup> Heirs;  
 To Chartres, Vigour; Japhet, Nose and Ears?<sup>3</sup>  
 Can they, in gems bid pallid Hippias glow,  
 In Fulvia's buckle ease the throbs below;  
 Or heal, old Narses, thy obscener ail,  
 With all th' embroid'ry plaister'd at thy tail?  
 They might (were Harpax not too wise to spend)  
 Give Harpax' self the blessing of a friend;  
 Or find some Doctor that would save the life  
 Of wretched Shylock, spite of Shylock's Wife:  
 But thousands die, without or this or that,  
 Die, and endow a College, or a Cat.  
 To some indeed, Heav'n grants the happier fate,  
 T'enrich a Bastard, or a Son they hate.

Perhaps you think the Poor might have their part?  
 Bond damns the Poor, and hates them from his heart:<sup>4</sup>  
 The grave Sir Gilbert<sup>5</sup> holds it for a rule,  
 That 'ev'ry man in want is knave or fool:  
 'God cannot love (says Blunt, with tearless eyes)  
 'The wretch he starves'—and piously denies:  
 But the good Bishop, with a meeker air,  
 Admits, and leaves them, Providence's care.

Yet, to be just to these poor men of pelf,  
 Each does but hate his neighbour as himself.  
 Damn'd to the Mines, an equal fate betides  
 The Slave that digs it, and the Slave that hides.

<sup>1</sup>See note on p. 124, Epistle I.

<sup>2</sup>A citizen of London, better known as 'Vulture Hopkins'.

<sup>3</sup>Japhet Crook, punished for swindling by the loss of his nose and ears.

<sup>4</sup>Bond, a director of the so-called *Charitable Corporation*, founded to lend money to the poor.

<sup>5</sup>Sir Gilbert Heathcote, a director of the Bank of England and one of the richest men of his period.

B. Who suffer thus, mere Charity should own,  
 Must act on motives pow'rful, tho' unknown.  
 P. Some War, some Plague, or Famine they foresee,  
 Some Revelation hid from you and me.  
 Why Shylock wants a meal, the cause is found,  
 He thinks a Loaf will rise to fifty pound.  
 What made Directors cheat in South-sea year?<sup>1</sup>  
 To live on Ven'son when it sold so dear.  
 Ask you why Phryne the whole Auction buys?  
 Phryne foresees a general Excise.  
 Why she and Sappho raise that monstrous sum?  
 Alas! they fear a man will cost a plum.

Wise Peter<sup>2</sup> sees the World's respect for Gold,  
 And therefore hopes this Nation may be sold:  
 Glorious Ambition! Peter, swell thy store,  
 And be what Rome's great Didius was before.

The Crown of Poland, venal twice an age,  
 To just three millions stunted modest Gage.<sup>3</sup>  
 But nobler scenes Maria's dreams unfold,  
 Hereditary Realms, and worlds of Gold.  
 Congenial souls! whose life one Av'rice joins,  
 And one fate buries in th' Asturian Mines.

Much injur'd Blunt!<sup>4</sup> why bears he Britain's hate?  
 A wizard told him in these words our fate:  
 'At length Corruption, like a gen'ral flood,  
 '(So long by watchful Ministers withstood)  
 'Shall deluge all; and Av'rice, creeping on,  
 'Spread like a low-born mist, and blot the Sun;

<sup>1</sup>1720, when the stock of the South Sea Company rose to its dizziest heights.

<sup>2</sup>Peter Walter, described by Pope as a 'dextrous attorney'.

<sup>3</sup>Mr. Gage and Lady Mary Herbert, both successful speculators, had royal ambitions: they subsequently retired to Spain in search of gold mines.

<sup>4</sup>Sir John Blunt, one of the first projectors of the South Sea Company.

'Statesman and Patriot ply alike the stocks,  
 'Peeress and Butler share alike the Box,  
 'And Judges job, and Bishops bite the town,  
 'And mighty Dukes pack Cards for half a crown.  
 'See Britain sunk in lucre's sordid charms,  
 'And France reveng'd of ANNE'S and EDWARD'S  
     arms?'

'Twas no Court-badge, great Scriv'ner! fir'd thy brain,  
 Nor lordly Luxury, nor City Gain:  
 No, 'twas thy righteous end, asham'd to see  
 Senates degen'rate, Patriots disagree,  
 And, nobly wishing Party-rage to cease,  
 To buy both sides, and give thy Country peace.

'All this is madness,' cries a sober sage:  
 But who, my friend, has reason in his rage?  
 'The ruling Passion, be it what it will,  
 'The ruling Passion conquers Reason still.'  
 Less mad the wildest whimsey we can frame,  
 Than ev'n that Passion, if it has no Aim;  
 For tho' such motives Folly you may call,  
 The Folly's greater to have none at all.

Hear then the truth: 'Tis Heav'n each Passion  
     sends,

'And diff'rent men directs to diff'rent ends.  
 'Extremes in Nature equal good produce,  
 'Extremes in Man concur to gen'ral use.'  
 Ask we what makes one keep, and one bestow?  
 That POW'R who bids the Ocean ebb and flow,  
 Bids seed-time, harvest, equal course maintain,  
 Thro' reconcil'd extremes of drought and rain,  
 Builds life on Death, on Change Duration founds,  
 And gives th' eternal wheels to know their rounds.

Riches, like insects, when conceal'd they lie,  
 Wait but for Wings, and in their season fly.



Who sees pale Mammon pine amidst his store,  
 Sees but a backward steward for the Poor;  
 This year a Reservoir, to keep and spare;  
 The next, a Fountain, spouting thro' his Heir,  
 In lavish streams to quench a Country's thirst,  
 And men and dogs shall drink him till they burst.

Old Cotta<sup>1</sup> sham'd his fortune and his birth,  
 Yet was not Cotta void of wit or worth:  
 What tho' (the use of barb'rous spits forgot)  
 His kitchen vied in coolness with his grot?  
 His court with nettles, moats with cresses stor'd,  
 With soups unbought and salads bless'd his board?  
 If Cotta liv'd on pulse, it was no more  
 Than Brahmins, Saints, and Sages did before;  
 To cram the Rich was prodigal expense,  
 And who would take the Poor from Providence?  
 Like some lone Chartreux stands the good old Hall,  
 Silence without, and Fasts within the wall;  
 No rafter'd roofs with dance and labor sound,  
 No noontide-bell invites the country round;  
 Tenants with sighs the smokeless tow'rs survey,  
 And turn th' unwilling steeds another way;  
 Benighted wanderers, the forest o'er,  
 Curse the sav'd candle, and unop'ning door;  
 While the gaunt mastiff growling at the gate,  
 Affrights the begger whom he longs to eat.

Not so his Son; he mark'd this oversight,  
 And then mistook reverse of wrong for right.  
 (For what to shun will no great knowledge need;  
 But what to follow, is a task indeed.)  
 Yet sure, of qualities deserving praise,  
 More go to ruin Fortunes, than to raise.  
 What slaughter'd hecatombs, what floods of wine,

<sup>1</sup>Supposed to represent the Duke of Newcastle.

Fill the capacious Squire, and deep Divine!  
 Yet no mean motive this profusion draws,  
 His oxen perish in his country's cause;  
 'Tis GEORGE and LIBERTY that crowns the cup,  
 And Zeal for that great House which eats him up.  
 The woods recede around the naked seat;  
 The Sylvans groan—no matter—for the Fleet;  
 Next goes his Wool—to clothe our valiant bands;  
 Last, for his Country's love, he sells his Lands.  
 To town he comes, completes the nation's hope,  
 And heads the bold Train-bands, and burns a Pope.  
 And shall not Britain now reward his toils,  
 Britain, that pays her Patriots with her Spoils?  
 In vain at Court the Bankrupt pleads his cause,  
 His thankless Country leaves him to her Laws.

The Sense to value Riches, with the Art  
 T'enjoy them, and the Virtue to impart,  
 Not meanly, nor ambitiously pursu'd,  
 Not sunk by sloth, nor rais'd by servitude;  
 To balance Fortune by a just expense,  
 Join with Economy, Magnificence;  
 With Splendour, Charity; with Plenty, Health;  
 O teach us, BATHURST! yet unspoil'd by wealth!  
 That secret rare, between th' extremes to move  
 Of mad Good-nature, and of mean Self-love.

*B.* To Worth or Want well-weigh'd, be Bounty  
 giv'n,  
 And ease, or emulate, the care of Heav'n;  
 (Whose measure full o'erflows on human race)  
 Mend Fortune's fault, and justify her grace.  
 Wealth in the gross is death, but life diffus'd;  
 As Poison heals, in just proportion us'd:  
 In heaps, like Ambergrise, a stink it lies,  
 But well-dispers'd, is Incense to the Skies.

*P.* Who starves by Nobles, or with Nobles eats?  
The Wretch that trusts them, and the Rogue that  
cheats.

Is there a Lord, who knows a cheerful noon  
Without a Fiddler, Flatt'rer, or Buffoon?  
Whose table, Wit, or modest Merit share,  
Unelbow'd by a Gamester, Pimp, or Play'r?  
Who copies Yours or OXFORD's better part,<sup>1</sup>  
To ease th' oppress'd, and raise the sinking heart?  
Where-e'er he shines, oh Fortune, gild the scene,  
And Angels guard him in the golden Mean!  
There, English Bounty yet awhile may stand,  
And Honour linger ere it leaves the land.

But all our praises why should Lords engross?  
Rise, honest Muse! and sing the MAN of ROSS:<sup>2</sup>  
Pleas'd Vaga<sup>3</sup> echoes thro' her winding bounds,  
And rapid Severn hoarse applause resounds.  
Who hung with woods yon mountain's sultry brow?  
From the dry rock who bade the waters flow?  
Not to the skies in useless columns tost,  
Or in proud falls magnificently lost,  
But clear and artless, pouring thro' the plain  
Health to the sick, and solace to the swain.  
Whose Cause-way parts the vale with shady rows?  
Whose Seats the weary Traveller repose?  
Who taught that heav'n-directed spire to rise?  
'The MAN of ROSS,' each lipping babe replies.  
Behold the Market-place with poor o'erspread!  
The MAN OF ROSS divides the weekly bread;  
He feeds yon Alms-house, neat, but void of state,

<sup>1</sup>Edward Harley, Earl of Oxford.

<sup>2</sup>John Kyrle, of Ross in Herefordshire, was the name of this philanthropist

<sup>3</sup>The Wye

Where Age and Want sit smiling at the gate;  
 Him portion'd maids, apprentic'd orphans blest,  
 The young who labour, and the old who rest.  
 Is any sick? the MAN of ROSS relieves,  
 Prescribes, attends, the med'cine makes, and gives.  
 Is there a variance; enter but his door,  
 Balk'd are the Courts, and contest is no more.  
 Despairing Quacks with curses fled the place,  
 And vile Attorneys, now a useless race.

*B.* Thrice happy man! enabled to pursue  
 What all so wish, but want the pow'r to do!  
 Oh say, what sums that gen'rous hand supply?  
 What mines, to swell that boundless charity?

*P.* Of Debts, and Taxes, Wife and Children clear,  
 This man possest—five hundred pounds a year.  
 Blush, Grandeur, blush! proud Courts, withdraw  
 your blaze!

Ye little Stars! hide your diminish'd rays.

*B.* And what? no monument, inscription, stone?  
 His race, his form, his name almost unknown?

*P.* Who builds a Church to God, and not to Fame,  
 Will never mark the marble with his Name:  
 Go, search it there, where to be born and die,  
 Of rich and poor makes all the history;  
 Enough, that Virtue fill'd the space between;  
 Prov'd, by the end of being, to have been.  
 When Hopkins dies,<sup>1</sup> a thousand lights attend  
 The wretch, who living sav'd a candle's end:  
 Should'ring God's altar a vile image stands,  
 Belies his features, nay extends his hands;  
 That live-long wig which Gorgon's self might own,  
 Eternal buckle takes in Parian stone.

<sup>1</sup>'Vulture' Hopkins (see p. 139 and note) received a funeral that cost more than £7,000.

Behold what blessings Wealth to life can lend!  
And see, what comfort it affords our end.

In the worst inn's worst room, with mat half-hung,  
The floors of plaister, and the walls of dung,  
On once a flock-bed, but repair'd with straw,  
With tape-ty'd curtains, never meant to draw,  
The George and Garter dangling from that bed  
Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty red,  
Great Villiers lies<sup>1</sup>—alas! how chang'd from him,  
That life of pleasure, and that soul of whim!  
Gallant and gay, in Cliveden's proud alcove,  
The bow'r of wanton Shrewsbury<sup>2</sup> and love;  
Or just as gay, at Council, in a ring  
Of mimic'd Statesmen, and their merry King.  
No Wit to flatter left of all his store!  
No Fool to laugh at, which he valu'd more.  
There, Victor of his health, of fortune, friends,  
And fame, this lord of useless thousands ends.

His Grace's fate sage Cutler<sup>3</sup> could foresee,  
And well (he thought) advis'd him, 'Live like me.'  
As well his Grace reply'd, 'Like you, Sir John?  
'That I can do, when all I have is gone.'  
Resolve me, Reason, which of these is worse,  
Want with a full, or with an empty purse?  
Thy life more wretched, Cutler, was confess'd,  
Arise, and tell me, was thy death more bless'd?  
Cutler saw tenants break, and houses fall,  
For very want; he could not build a wall.  
His only daughter in a stranger's pow'r,

<sup>1</sup>George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham.

<sup>2</sup>Lady Shrewsbury, mistress of the Duke of Buckingham, whom she is said to have attended, disguised as a page, when he killed her husband in a duel.

<sup>3</sup>Sir John Cutler, a wealthy and grasping citizen of Restoration London.

For very want; he could not pay a dow'r.  
 A few grey hairs his rev'rend temples crown'd,  
 'Twas very want that sold them for two pound.  
 What ev'n deny'd a cordial at his end,  
 Banish'd the doctor, and expell'd the friend?  
 What but a want, which you perhaps think mad,  
 Yet numbers feel the want of what he had!  
 Cutler and Brutus, dying both exclaim,  
 'Virtue! and Wealth! what are ye but a name!'

Say, for such worth are other worlds prepar'd?  
 Or are they both, in this their own reward?  
 A knotty point! to which we now proceed.  
 But you are tir'd—I'll tell a tale— *B.* Agreed.

*P.* Where London's column, pointing at the skies,  
 Like a tall bully, lifts the head, and lies;  
 There dwelt a Citizen of sober fame,  
 A plain good man, and Balaam was his name;  
 Religious, punctual, frugal, and so forth;  
 His word would pass for more than he was worth.  
 One solid dish his week-day meal affords,  
 An added pudding solemniz'd the Lord's:  
 Constant at Church, and Change; his gains were sure,  
 His givings rare, save farthings to the poor.

The Dev'l was piqu'd such saintship to behold,  
 And long'd to tempt him like good Job of old:  
 But Satan now is wiser than of yore,  
 And tempts by making rich, not making poor.

Rous'd by the Prince of Air, the whirlwinds sweep  
 The surge, and plunge his Father in the deep;  
 Then full against his Cornish lands they roar,  
 And two rich ship-wrecks bless the lucky shore.

Sir Balaam now, he lives like other folks,  
 He takes his chirping pint, and cracks his jokes:  
 'Live like yourself,' was soon my Lady's word;

And lo! two puddings smok'd upon the board.

Asleep and naked as an Indian lay,

An honest factor stole a Gem away.

He pledg'd it to the knight; the knight had wit,

So kept the Di'mond, and the rogue was bit.

Some scruple rose, but thus he eas'd his thought,

'I'll now give six-pence where I gave a groat;

'Where once I went to Church, I'll now go twice—

'And am so clear too of all other vice'.

The Tempter saw his time; the work he ply'd;

Stocks and Subscriptions pour on ev'ry side,

'Till all the Demon makes his full descent

In one abundant show'r of Cent per Cent,

Sinks deep within him, and possesses whole,

Then dubs Director, and secures his soul.

Behold Sir Balaam, now a man of spirit,

Ascribes his gettings to his parts and merit;

What late he call'd a Blessing, now was Wit,

And God's good Providence, a lucky Hit.

Things change their titles, as our manners turn:

His Counting-house employ'd the Sunday-morn;

Seldom at Church ('twas such a busy life)

But duly sent his family and wife.

There (so the Dev'l ordain'd) one Christmas-tide

My good old Lady catch'd a cold, and died.

A Nymph of Quality admires our Knight;

He marries, bows at Court, and grows polite:

Leaves the dull Cits, and joins (to please the fair)

The well-bred cuckolds in St. James's air:

First, for his Son a gay commission buys,

Who drinks, whores, fights, and in a duel dies:

His daughter flaunts a Viscount's tawdry wife;

She bears a Coronet and P—x for life.

In Britain's Senate he a seat obtains,

And one more Pensioner St. Stephen gains.  
 My Lady falls to play; so bad her chance,  
 He must repair it; takes a bribe from France;  
 The House impeach him; Coningsby harangues;  
 The Court forsake him, and Sir Balaam hangs:  
 Wife, son, and daughter, Satan! are thy own,  
 His wealth, yet dearer, forfeit to the Crown:  
 The Devil and the King divide the prize,  
 And sad Sir Balaam curses God and dies.

## EPISTLE IV

TO

RICHARD BOYLE, EARL OF BURLINGTON

*Of the Use of RICHES*

'TIS strange, the Miser should his Cares employ  
 To gain those Riches he can ne'er enjoy:  
 Is it less strange, the Prodigal should waste  
 His wealth, to purchase what he ne'er can taste?  
 Not for himself he sees, or hears, or eats;  
 Artists must choose his Pictures, Music, Meats:  
 He buys for Topham,<sup>1</sup> Drawings and Designs,  
 For Pembroke,<sup>2</sup> Statues, dirty Gods, and Coins;  
 Rare monkish Manuscripts for Hearne<sup>3</sup> alone,  
 And Books for Mead, and Butterflies for Sloane.<sup>4</sup>  
 Think we all these are for himself? no more  
 Than his fine Wife, alas! or finer Whore.

For what has Virro painted, built, and planted?  
 Only to show, how many Tastes he wanted.

<sup>1</sup>A well-known collector of drawings.

<sup>2</sup>Henry, Earl of Pembroke, who continued the embellishment of Wilton.

<sup>3</sup>Thomas Hearne, a renowned antiquary.

<sup>4</sup>Dr. Mead and Sir John Sloane were both eminent physicians and celebrated men of taste.



What brought Sir Visto's ill-got wealth to waste?  
 Some Dæmon whisper'd, 'Visto! have a Taste'.  
 Heav'n visits with a Taste the wealthy fool,  
 And needs no Rod but Ripley<sup>1</sup> with a Rule.  
 See! sportive fate, to punish awkward pride,  
 Bids Bubo<sup>2</sup> build, and sends him such a Guide:  
 A standing sermon, at each year's expense,  
 That never Coxcomb reach'd Magnificence!

You show us, Rome was glorious, not profuse,<sup>3</sup>  
 And pompous buildings once were things of Use.  
 Yet shall, my Lord, your just, your noble rules  
 Fill half the land with Imitating-Fools;  
 Who random drawings from your sheets shall take,  
 And of one beauty many blunders make;  
 Load some vain Church with old Theatric state,  
 Turn Arcs of triumph to a Garden-gate;  
 Reverse your Ornaments, and hang them all  
 On some patch'd dog-hole ek'd with ends of wall;  
 Then clap four slices of Pilaster on't,  
 That, lac'd with bits of rustic, makes a Front.  
 Shall call the winds thro' long arcades to roar,  
 Proud to catch cold at a Venetian door,  
 Conscious they act a true Palladian part,  
 And, if they starve, they starve by rules of art.

Oft have you hinted to your brother Peer  
 A certain truth, which many buy too dear.  
 Something there is more needful than Expense,  
 And something previous ev'n to Taste—'tis Sense:  
 Good Sense, which only is the gift of Heav'n,  
 And tho' no Science, fairly worth the seven:

<sup>1</sup>Ripley, a former carpenter, was one of the craftsmen employed by Sir Robert Walpole in the building of Houghton.

<sup>2</sup>Bubb Doddington.

<sup>3</sup>Lord Burlington was then publishing Inigo Jones's *Designs* and Palladio's *Antiquities of Rome*.

---

A Light, which in yourself you must perceive;  
Jones and Le Nôtre have it not to give.

To build, to plant, whatever you intend,  
To rear the Column, or the Arch to bend,  
To swell the Terrace, or to sink the Grot;  
In all, let Nature never be forgot.  
But treat the Goddess like a modest fair,  
Nor over-dress, nor leave her wholly bare;  
Let not each beauty ev'rywhere be spy'd,  
Where half the skill is decently to hide.  
He gains all points, who pleasingly confounds,  
Surprises, varies, and conceals the Bounds.

Consult the Genius of the Place in all;  
That tells the Waters or to rise, or fall;  
Or helps th' ambitious Hill the heav'ns to scale,  
Or scoops in circling theatres the Vale;  
Calls in the Country, catches op'ning glades,  
Joins willing woods, and varies shades from shades;  
Now breaks, or now directs, th' intending Lines;  
Paints as you plant, and, as you work, designs.

Still follow Sense, of ev'ry Art the Soul,  
Parts answ'ring parts shall slide into a whole,  
Spontaneous beauties all around advance,  
Start ev'n from Difficulty, strike from Chance;  
Nature shall join you; Time shall make it grow  
A Work to wonder at—perhaps a STOWE.

Without it, proud Versailles! thy glory falls;  
And Nero's Terraces desert their walls:  
The vast Parterres a thousand hands shall make,  
Lo! COBHAM comes, and floats them with a Lake:  
Or cut wide views thro' Mountains to the Plain,  
You'll wish your hill or shelter'd seat again.  
Ev'n in an ornament its place remark,

Nor in an Hermitage set Dr. Clarke.<sup>1</sup>

Behold Villario's ten years' toil complete;  
His Quincunx darkens, his Espaliers meet;  
The Wood supports the Plain, the parts unite,  
And strength of Shade contends with strength of  
Light;

A waving Glow the bloomy beds display,  
Blushing in bright diversities of day,  
With silver-quiv'ring rills mæander'd o'er—  
Enjoy them, you! Villario can no more;  
Tir'd of the scene Parterres and Fountains yield,  
He finds at last he better likes a Field.

Thro' his young Woods how pleas'd Sabinus stray'd,  
Or sat delighted in the thick'ning shade,  
With annual joy the redd'ning shoots to greet,  
Or see the stretching branches long to meet!  
His Son's fine Taste an op'ner Vista loves,  
Foe to the Dryads of his Father's groves;  
One boundless Green, or flourish'd Carpet views,  
With all the mournful family of Yews;  
The thriving plants ignoble broomsticks made,  
Now sweep those Alleys they were born to shade.

At Timon's Villa<sup>2</sup> let us pass a day,  
Where all cry out, 'What sums are thrown away!'  
So proud, so grand; of that stupendous air,  
Soft and Agreeable come never there.  
Greatness, with Timon, dwells in such a draught  
As brings all Brobdignag before your thought.  
To compass this, his building is a Town,  
His pond an Ocean, his parterre a Down:

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Clarke, one of Queen Caroline's chaplains, suspected of Arian leanings: his bust was placed in the Queen's rustic Hermitage.

<sup>2</sup>Pope evidently had in mind the Duke of Chandos's seat at Canons. For a very different reference to the Duke, see p. 120, Epistle I.

Who but must laugh, the Master when he sees,  
 A puny insect, shiv'ring at a breeze!  
 Lo, what huge heaps of littleness around!  
 The whole, a labour'd Quarry above ground;  
 Two Cupids squirt before; a Lake behind  
 Improves the keenness of the Northern wind.  
 His Gardens next your admiration call,  
 On ev'ry side you look, behold the Wall!  
 No pleasing Intricacies intervene,  
 No artful wildness to perplex the scene;  
 Grove nods at grove, each Alley has a brother,  
 And half the platform just reflects the other.  
 The suff'ring eye inverted Nature sees,  
 Trees cut to Statues, Statues thick as trees;  
 With here a Fountain, never to be play'd;  
 And there a Summer-house, that knows no shade;  
 Here Amphitrite sails thro' myrtle bow'rs;  
 There Gladiators fight, or die in flow'rs;  
 Un-watered see the drooping sea-horse mourn,  
 And swallows roost in Nilus' dusty Urn.

My Lord advances with majestic mien,  
 Smit with the mighty pleasure, to be seen:  
 But soft,—by regular approach,—not yet,—  
 First thro' the length of yon hot Terrace sweat;  
 And when up ten steep slopes you've dragg'd your  
 thighs,

Just at his Study-door he'll bless your eyes.

His Study! with what Authors is it stor'd?  
 In Books, not Author's, curious is my Lord;  
 To all their dated Backs he turns you round:  
 These Aldus printed, those Du Sueil has bound.  
 Lo some are Vellum, and the rest as good  
 For all his Lordship knows, but they are Wood.  
 For Locke or Milton 'tis in vain to look,

These shelves admit not any modern book.

And now the Chapel's silver bell you hear,  
That summons you to all the Pride of Pray'r:  
Light quirks of Music, broken and uneven,  
Make the soul dance upon a Jig to Heav'n.  
On painted Ceilings you devoutly stare,  
Where sprawl the Saints of Verrio or Laguerre,<sup>1</sup>  
On gilded clouds in fair expansion lie,  
And bring all Paradise before your eye.  
To rest, the Cushion and soft Dean invite,  
Who never mentions Hell to ears polite.

But hark! the chiming Clocks to dinner call;  
A hundred footsteps scrape the marble Hall:  
The rich Buffet well-colour'd Serpents grace,  
And gaping Tritons spew to wash your face.  
Is this a dinner? this a Genial room?  
No, 'tis a Temple, and a Hecatomb.  
A solemn Sacrifice, perform'd in state,  
You drink by measure, and to minutes eat.  
So quick retires each flying course, you'd swear  
Sancho's dread Doctor and his Wand were there.  
Between each Act the trembling salvers ring,  
From soup to sweet-wine, and God bless the King.  
In plenty starving, tantaliz'd in state,  
And complaisantly help'd to all I hate,  
Treated, caress'd, and tir'd, I take my leave,  
Sick of his civil Pride from Morn to Eve;  
I curse such lavish cost, and little skill,  
And swear no Day was ever past so ill.

Yet hence the Poor are cloth'd, the Hungry fed;  
Health to himself, and to his Infants bread  
The Lab'rer bears: What his hard Heart denies,

<sup>1</sup>Verrio was employed in the decoration of Windsor and Hampton Court: Laguerre, at Blenheim.

His charitable Vanity supplies.

Another age shall see the golden Ear  
Embrown the Slope, and nod on the Parterre,  
Deep Harvests bury all his pride has plann'd,  
And laughing Ceres re-assume the land.

Who then shall grace, or who improve the Soil?  
Who plants like BATHURST, or who builds like  
BOYLE.

'Tis Use alone that sanctifies Expense,  
And Splendour borrows all her rays from Sense.

His Father's Acres who enjoys in peace,  
Or makes his Neighbours glad, if he increase:  
Whose cheerful Tenants bless their yearly toil,  
Yet to their Lord owe more than to the soil;  
Whose ample Lawns are not asham'd to feed  
The milky heifer and deserving steed;  
Whose rising Forests, not for pride or show,  
But future Buildings, future Navies, grow:  
Let his plantations stretch from down to down,  
First shade a Country, and then raise a Town.

You too proceed! make falling Arts your care,  
Erect new wonders, and the old repair;  
Jones and Palladio to themselves restore,  
And be whate'er Vitruvius was before:  
'Till Kings call forth th' Ideas of your mind,  
(Proud to accomplish what such hands designed,)  
Bid Harbours open, public Ways extend,  
Bid Temples, worthier of the God, ascend;  
Bid the broad Arch the dang'rous Flood contain,  
The Mole projected break the roaring Main;  
Back to his bounds their subject Sea command,  
And roll obedient Rivers thro' the Land:  
These Honours Peace to happy Britain brings,  
These are Imperial Works, and worthy Kings.

## EPISTLE V

TO MR. ADDISON

*Occasioned by his Dialogues on MEDALS*

SEE the wild Waste of all-devouring years!  
 How Rome her own sad Sepulchre appears,  
 With nodding arches, broken temples spread!  
 The very Tombs now vanish'd like their dead!  
 Imperial wonders rais'd on Nations spoil'd,  
 Where mix'd with Slaves the groaning Martyr toil'd:  
 Huge Theatres, that now unpeopled Woods,  
 Now drain'd a distant country of her Floods:  
 Fanes, which admiring Gods with pride survey,  
 Statues of Men, scarce less alive than they!  
 Some felt the silent stroke of mould'ring age,  
 Some hostile fury, some religious rage.  
 Barbarian blindness, Christian zeal conspire,  
 And Papal piety, and Gothic fire.  
 Perhaps, by its own ruins sav'd from flame,  
 Some bury'd marble half preserves a name;  
 That Name the learn'd with fierce disputes pursue,  
 And give to Titus old Vespasian's due.

Ambition sigh'd: She found it vain to trust  
 The faithless Column and the crumbling Bust:  
 Hugh moles, whose shadow stretch'd from shore to  
 shore,

Their ruins perish'd, and their place no more!  
 Convinc'd, she now contracts her vast design,  
 And all her triumphs shrink into a Coin.  
 A narrow orb each crowded conquest keeps;  
 Beneath her Palm here sad Judæa weeps;  
 Now scantier limits the proud Arch confine,  
 And scarce are seen the prostrate Nile or Rhine;

A small Euphrates thro' the piece is roll'd,  
And little Eagles wave their wings in gold.

The Medal, faithful to its charge of fame,  
Thro' climes and ages bears each form and name:  
In one short view subjected to our eye  
Gods, Emp'rors, Heroes, Sages, Beauties, lie.  
With sharpen'd sight pale Antiquaries pore,  
Th' inscription value, but the rust adore.  
This the blue varnish, that the green endears,  
The sacred rust of twice ten hundred years!  
To gain Pescennius one employs his schemes,  
One grasps a Cecrops in ecstatic dreams.  
Poor Vadius, long with learned spleen devour'd,  
Can taste no pleasure since his Shield was scour'd;  
And Curio, restless by the Fair-one's side,  
Sighs for an Otho, and neglects his bride.  
Theirs is the Vanity, the Learning thine:  
Touch'd by thy hand, again Rome's glories shine;  
Her Gods, and god-like Heroes rise to view,  
And all her faded garlands bloom anew.  
Nor blush, these studies thy regard engage;  
These pleas'd the Fathers of poetic rage;  
The verse and sculpture bore an equal part,  
And Art reflected images to Art.

Oh when shall Britain, conscious of her claim,  
Stand emulous of Greek and Roman fame?  
In living medals see her wars enroll'd,  
And vanquish'd realms supply recording gold?  
Here, rising bold, the Patriot's honest face;  
There Warriors frowning in historic brass?  
Then future ages with delight shall see  
How Plato's, Bacon's, Newton's looks agree;  
Or in fair series laurell'd Bards be shown,  
A Virgil there, and here an Addison.



Then shall thy CRAGGS (and let me call him mine)  
On the cast ore, another Pollio, shine;  
With aspect open, shall erect his head,  
And round the orb in lasting notes be read,  
'Statesman, yet friend to Truth! of soul sincere,  
'In action faithful, and in honour clear;  
'Who broke no promise, serv'd no private end,  
'Who gain'd no title, and who lost no friend;  
'Ennobled by himself, by all approv'd,  
'And prais'd, unenvy'd, by the Muse he lov'd.'

EPISTLE TO DR. ARBUTHNOT<sup>1</sup>  
BEING THE  
PROLOGUE TO THE SATIRES

P. SHUT, shut the door, good John! fatigu'd, I said,  
Tie up the knocker, say I'm sick, I'm dead.  
The Dog-star rages! nay 'tis past a doubt,  
All Bedlam, or Parnassus, is let out:  
Fire in each eye, and papers in each hand,  
They rave, recite, and madden round the land.

What walls can guard me, or what shades can hide?  
They pierce my thickets, thro' my Grot they glide;  
By land, by water, they renew the charge;  
They stop the chariot, and they board the barge.  
No place is sacred, not the Church is free;  
Ev'n Sunday shines no Sabbath-day to me;  
Then from the Mint<sup>2</sup> walks forth the Man of rhyme,  
Happy to catch me just at Dinner-time.

Is there a Parson, much bemus'd in beer,  
A maudlin Poetess, a rhyming Peer,  
A Clerk, foredoom'd his father's soul to cross,  
Who pens a Stanza, when he should *engross*?  
Is there, who, lock'd from ink and paper, scrawls  
With desp'rate charcoal round his darken'd walls?  
All fly to TWIT'NAM, and in humble strain  
Apply to me, to keep them mad or vain.  
Arthur,<sup>3</sup> whose giddy son neglects the Laws,  
Imputes to me and my damn'd works the cause:  
Poor Cornus sees his frantic wife elope,  
And curses Wit, and Poetry, and Pope.

<sup>1</sup>Dr. John Arbuthnot, physician, mathematician, classical scholar: friend of Pope, Swift, Oxford, Bolingbroke; member of the Scriblerus Club.

<sup>2</sup>The refuge of insolvent debtors.

<sup>3</sup>Arthur Moore, an able politician, father of the poetaster James Moore.

Friend to my Life! (which did not you prolong,  
 The world had wanted many an idle song)  
 What *Drop* or *Nostrum* can this plague remove?  
 Or which must end me, a Fool's wrath or love?  
 A dire dilemma! either way I'm sped,  
 If foes, they write, if friends, they read me dead.  
 Seiz'd and tied down to judge, how wretched I!  
 Who can't be silent, and who will not lie.  
 To laugh, were want of goodness and of grace,  
 And to be grave, exceeds all Pow'r of face.  
 I sit with sad civility, I read  
 With honest anguish, and an aching head;  
 And drop at last, but in unwilling ears,  
 This saving counsel, 'Keep your piece nine years'.

'Nine years!' cries he, who high in Drury-lane,  
 Lull'd by soft Zephyrs thro' the broken pane,  
 Rhymes ere he wakes, and prints before *Term* ends,  
 Oblig'd by hunger, and request of friends:  
 'The piece, you think, is incorrect? why, take it,  
 'I'm all submission, what you'd have it, make it.'

Three things another's modest wishes bound,  
 My friendship, and a Prologue, and ten pound.

Pitholeon sends to me: 'You know his Grace,  
 'I want a Patron; ask him for a Place.'  
 "Pitholeon libell'd me,"—'but here's a letter  
 'Informs you, Sir, 'twas when he knew no better.  
 'Dare you refuse him? Curl<sup>1</sup> invites to dine,  
 'He'll write a *Journal*, or he'll turn Divine.'  
 Bless me! a packet.—'Tis a stranger sues,  
 'A Virgin Tragedy, an Orphan Muse.'  
 If I dislike it, 'Furies, death and rage!'  
 If I approve, 'Commend it to the Stage.'  
 There (thank my stars) my whole Commission ends,

<sup>1</sup>Edmund Curl, the bookseller.

The Play'rs and I are, luckily, no friends,  
 Fir'd that the house reject him, 'Sdeath I'll print it,  
 'And shame the fools——Your Int'rest, Sir, with  
 Lintot!'<sup>1</sup>

'Lintot, dull rogue! will think your price too much.'  
 'Not, Sir, if you revise it, and retouch.'  
 All my demurs but double his Attacks;  
 At last he whispers, 'Do; and we go snacks'.  
 Glad of a quarrel, straight I clap the door,  
 Sir, let me see your works and you no more.

'Tis sung, when Midas' Ears began to spring,  
 (Midas, a sacred person and a king)  
 His very Minister who spy'd them first,  
 (Some say his Queen) was forc'd to speak, or burst.  
 And is not mine, my friend, a sorer case,  
 When ev'ry coxcomb perks them in my face?  
*A.* Good friend, forbear! you deal in dang'rous things.  
 I'd never name Queens, Ministers, or Kings;  
 Keep close to Ears, and those let asses prick;  
 'Tis nothing— *P.* Nothing? if they bite and kick?  
 Out with it, DUNCIAD! let the secret pass,  
 That secret to each fool, that he's an Ass:  
 The truth once told (and wherefore should we lie?)  
 The Queen of Midas slept, and so may I.

You think this cruel? take it for a rule,  
 No creature smarts so little as a fool.  
 Let peals of laughter, Codrus! round thee break,  
 Thou unconcern'd canst hear the mighty crack:  
 Pit, Box, and gall'ry in convulsions hurl'd,  
 Thou stand'st unshook amidst a bursting world.  
 Who shames a Scribbler? break one cobweb thro',  
 He spins the slight, self-pleasing thread anew:  
 Destroy his fib or sophistry, in vain,

<sup>1</sup>Bernard Lintot became Pope's publisher in 1712.

The creature's at his dirty work again,  
 Thron'd in the centre of his thin designs,  
 Proud of a vast extent of flimsy lines!  
 Whom have I hurt? has Poet yet, or Peer,  
 Lost the arch'd eye-brow, or Parnassian sneer?  
 And has not Colley still his Lord, and whore?  
 His Butchers Henley, his free-masons Moore?  
 Does not one table Bavius still admit?  
 Still to one Bishop Philips seem a wit?<sup>1</sup>  
 Still Sappho— *A.* Hold! for God's sake—you'll offend,  
 No Names!—be calm!—learn prudence of a friend!  
 I too could write, and I am twice as tall;  
 But foes like these— *P.* One Flatt'rer's worse than all.  
 Of all mad creatures, if the learn'd are right,  
 It is the slaver kills, and not the bite.  
 A fool quite angry is quite innocent:  
 Alas! 'tis ten times worse when they *repent*.

One dedicates in high heroic prose,  
 And ridicules beyond a hundred foes:  
 One from all Grubstreet will my fame defend,  
 And more abusive, calls himself my friend.  
 This prints my *Letters*, that expects a bribe,  
 And others roar aloud, 'Subscribe, subscribe'.

There are, who to my person pay their court:  
 I cough like *Horace*, and, tho' lean, am short,  
*Ammon's* great son one shoulder had too high,  
 Such *Ovid's* nose, and 'Sir! you have an Eye'—  
 Go on, obliging creatures, make me see  
 All that disgrac'd my *Betters*, met in me.  
 Say for my comfort, languishing in bed,  
 'Just so immortal *Maro* held his head':  
 And when I die, be sure you let me know

<sup>1</sup>Ambrose, or 'namby-pamby', Philips, author of *Pastorals*, was patronized by Boulter, afterwards Primate of all Ireland.

Great *Homer* died three thousand years ago.

Why did I write? what sin to me unknown  
 Dipt me in ink, my parents', or my own?  
 As yet a child, nor yet a fool to fame,  
 I lisp'd in numbers, for the numbers came.  
 I left no calling for this idle trade,  
 No duty broke, no father disobey'd.  
 The Muse but serv'd to ease some friend, not Wife,  
 To help me thro' this long disease, my Life,  
 To second, ARBUTHNOT! thy Art and Care,  
 And teach the Being you preserv'd, to bear.

But why then publish? *Granville* the polite,  
 And knowing *Walsh*, would tell me I could write;  
 Well-natur'd *Garth* inflam'd with early praise;  
 And *Congreve* lov'd, and *Swift* endur'd my lays;  
 The courtly *Talbot*, *Somers*, *Sheffield* read;  
 Ev'n mitred *Rochester* would nod the head,  
 And *St. John's* self (great *Dryden's* friends before)  
 With open arms receiv'd one Poet more.  
 Happy my studies, when by these approv'd!  
 Happier their author, when by these below'd!  
 From these the world will judge of men and books,  
 Not from the *Burnets*, *Oldmixons*, and *Cookes*.<sup>1</sup>

Soft were my numbers; who could take offence,  
 While pure Description held the place of Sense?  
 Like gentle *Fanny's*<sup>2</sup> was my flow'ry theme,  
 A painted mistress, or a purling stream.

<sup>1</sup>Pope contrasts this list of his own distinguished early patrons, several of whom had also been close friends of John Dryden, with Burnet, author of the *History of My Own Times*, whose partisanship he distrusted: John Oldmixon, 'the unjust censurer of Mr. Addison', an historian and critic; and Cook, a journalist, who had written a 'thing called the Battle of Poets' in which Swift and Pope were 'utterly routed'.

<sup>2</sup>'Fanny' represents the notorious Lord Hervey, otherwise 'Sporus', one of Pope's most envenomed opponents.

Yet then did *Gildon*<sup>1</sup> draw his venal quill;—  
 I wish'd the man a dinner, and sat still.  
 Yet then did *Dennis*<sup>2</sup> rave in furious fret;  
 I never answer'd,—I was not in debt.  
 If want provok'd, or madness made them print,  
 I wag'd no war with *Bedlam* or the *Mint*.

Did some more sober Critic come abroad;  
 If wrong, I smil'd; if right, I kiss'd the rod.  
 Pains, reading, study, are their just pretence,  
 And all they want is spirit, taste, and sense.  
 Commas and points they set exactly right,  
 And 'twere a sin to rob them of their mite.  
 Yet ne'er one sprig of laurel grac'd these ribalds,  
 From slashing *Bentley* down to piddling *Tibalds*:<sup>3</sup>  
 Each wight, who reads not, and but scans and spells,  
 Each Word-catcher, that lives on syllables,  
 Ev'n such small Critics some regard may claim,  
 Preserv'd in *Milton's* or in *Shakespeare's* name.  
 Pretty! in amber to observe the forms  
 Of hairs, or straws, or dirt, or grubs, or worms!  
 The things, we know, are neither rich nor rare,  
 But wonder how the devil they got there.

Were others angry: I excus'd them too;  
 Well might they rage, I gave them but their due.  
 A man's true merit 'tis not hard to find;  
 But each man's secret standard in his mind,  
 That Casting-weight pride adds to emptiness,  
 This, who can gratify? for who can *guess*?  
 The Bard whom pilfer'd Pastorals renown,

<sup>1</sup>Charles Gildon, playwright, critic and pamphleteer.

<sup>2</sup>Critic and miscellaneous writer, who ranked high in the list of Pope's literary adversaries.

<sup>3</sup>Dr Richard Bentley, the great classical scholar, had produced an unfortunate edition of *Paradise Lost*. Pope, however, is less than just to Theobald, whose edition of Shakespeare is more scholarly than his own.

Who turns a Persian tale for half a Crown,<sup>1</sup>  
 Just writes to make his barrenness appear,  
 And strains, from hard-bound brains, eight lines a  
     year;

He, who still wanting, tho' he lives on theft,  
 Steals much, spends little, yet has nothing left:  
 And He, who now to sense, now nonsense leaning,  
 Means not, but blunders round about a meaning:  
 And He, whose fustian's so sublimely bad,  
 It is not Poetry, but prose run mad:

All these, my modest Satire bad *translate*,  
 And own'd that nine such Poets made a *Tate*.<sup>2</sup>  
 How did they fume, and stamp, and roar, and chafe  
 And swear, not ADDISON himself was safe.

Peace to all such! but were there One whose fires  
 True Genius kindles, and fair Fame inspires;  
 Blest with each talent and each art to please,  
 And born to write, converse, and live with ease:  
 Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,  
 Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne.  
 View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,  
 And hate for arts that caus'd himself to rise;  
 Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,  
 And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer;  
 Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,  
 Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike;  
 Alike reserv'd to blame, or to commend,  
 A tim'rous foe, and a suspicious friend;  
 Dreading ev'n fools, by Flatterers besieg'd,  
 And so obliging, that he ne'er oblig'd;  
 Like *Cato*, give his little Senate laws,  
 And sit attentive to his own applause;

<sup>1</sup>Ambrose Philips.

<sup>2</sup>Nahum Tate, poetaster and translator.



While Wits and Templars ev'ry sentence raise,  
 And wonder with a foolish face of praise:—  
 Who but must laugh, if such a man there be?  
 Who would not weep, if ATTICUS<sup>1</sup> were he?  
 What tho' my Name stood rubric on the walls,  
 Or plaister'd posts, with claps, in capitals?  
 Or smoking forth, a hundred hawkers' load,  
 On wings of winds came flying all abroad?  
 I sought no homage from the Race that write;  
 I kept, like *Asian* Monarchs, from their sight:  
 Poems I heeded (now be-rhym'd so long)  
 No more than thou, great GEORGE! a birth-day song.  
 I ne'er with wits or witlings pass'd my days,  
 To spread about the itch of verse and praise;  
 Nor like a puppy, daggled thro' the town,  
 To fetch and carry sing-song up and down;  
 Nor at Rehearsals sweat, and mouth'd, and cry'd,  
 With handkerchief and orange at my side;  
 But sick of fops, and poetry, and prate,  
 To *Bufo* left the whole *Castalian* state.

Proud as *Apollo* on his forked hill,  
 Sat full-blown *Bufo*, puff'd by ev'ry quill;<sup>2</sup>  
 Fed with soft Dedication all day long,  
*Horace* and he went hand in hand in song.  
 His Library (where busts of Poets dead  
 And a true *Pindar* stood without a head,  
 Receiv'd of wits an undistinguish'd race,  
 Who first his judgment ask'd, and then a place:  
 Much they extoll'd his pictures, much his seat,  
 And flatter'd ev'ry day, and some days eat:  
 Till grown more frugal in his riper days,  
 He paid some bards with port, and some with praise;

<sup>1</sup> Addison. Compare the eloquent tribute to Addison in Epistle V of the *Moral Essays*.      <sup>2</sup>This aristocratic patron remains unidentified.

To some a dry rehearsal was assign'd,  
 And others (harder still) he paid in kind.  
*Dryden* alone (what wonder?) came not nigh,  
*Dryden* alone escap'd this judging eye:  
 But still the *Great* have kindness in reserve,  
 He help'd to bury whom he help'd to starve.

May some choice patron bless each gray goose quill!  
 May ev'ry *Bavius* have his *Bufo* still!  
 So, when a Statesman wants a day's defence,  
 Or Envy holds a whole week's war with Sense,  
 Or simple pride for flatt'ry makes demands,  
 May dunce by dunce be whistled off my hands!  
 Blest be the *Great*! for those they take away,  
 And those they left me; for they left me GAY;<sup>1</sup>  
 Left me to see neglected Genius bloom,  
 Neglected die, and tell it on his tomb:  
 Of all thy blameless life the sole return  
 My Verse, and QUEENSB'RY weeping o'er thy urn!

Oh let me live my own, and die so too!  
 (To live and die is all I have to do:)  
 Maintain a Poet's dignity and ease,  
 And see what friends, and read what books I please;  
 Above a Patron, tho' I condescend  
 Sometimes to call a minister my friend.  
 I was not born for Courts or great affairs;  
 I pay my debts, believe, and say my pray'rs;  
 Can sleep without a Poem in my head;  
 Nor know, if *Dennis* be alive or dead.

Why am I ask'd what next shall see the light?  
 Heav'ns! was I born for nothing but to write?  
 Has Life no joys for me? or (to be grave)

<sup>1</sup>John Gay, after he had 'dangled for twenty years about a court', was finally disappointed of the preferment he desired. He was 'negligent and a bad manager', but 'died worth upwards of £3,000'.

Have I no friend to serve, no soul to save?  
 'I found him close with *Swift*'—'Indeed? no doubt',  
 (Cries prating *Balbus*) 'something will come out.'  
 'Tis all in vain, deny it as I will.

'No, such a Genius never can lie still';  
 And then for mine obligingly mistakes  
 The first Lampon Sir *Will.* or *Bubo*<sup>1</sup> makes.  
 Poor guiltless I! and can I choose but smile,  
 When ev'ry Coxcomb knows me by my *Style*?

    Curst be the verse, how well soe'er it flow,  
 That tends to make one worthy man my foe,  
 Give Virtue scandal, Innocence a fear,  
 Or from the soft-eyed Virgin steal a tear!  
 But he who hurts a harmless neighbour's peace,  
 Insults fall'n worth, or Beauty in distress,  
 Who loves a Lie, lame slander helps about,  
 Who writes a Libel, or who copies out:  
 That Fop, whose pride affects a patron's name,  
 Yet absent, wounds an author's honest fame:  
 Who can *your* merit *selfishly* approve,  
 And show the *sense* of it without the *love*;  
 Who has the vanity to call you friend,  
 Yet wants the honour, injur'd, to defend;  
 Who tells whate'er you think, whate'er you say,  
 And, if he lie not, must at least betray:  
 Who to the *Dean*, and *silver bell* can swear,<sup>2</sup>  
 And sees at *Canons* what was never there;  
 Who reads, but with a lust to misapply,  
 Make Satire a Lampon, and Fiction, Lie.  
 A lash like mine no honest man shall dread,  
 But all such babbling blockheads in his stead.

<sup>1</sup>Sir William Yonge and Bubb Doddington.

<sup>2</sup>Thus Pope does his best to excuse himself for his presumed attack upon the Duke of Chandos. See p. 152 Epistle IV, *Moral Essays*.

Let *Sporus* tremble<sup>1</sup>— *A.* What? that thing of silk,  
*Sporus*, that mere white curd of Ass's milk?<sup>2</sup>  
 Satire or sense, alas! can *Sporus* feel?  
 Who breaks a butterfly upon a wheel?

*P.* Yet let me flap this bug with gilded wings,  
 This painted child of dirt, that stinks and stings;  
 Whose buzz the witty and the fair annoys,  
 Yet wit ne'er tastes, and beauty ne'er enjoys:  
 So well-bred spaniels civilly delight  
 In mumbling of the game they dare not bite.  
 Eternal smiles his emptiness betray,  
 As shallow streams run dimpling all the way.  
 Whether in florid impotence he speaks,  
 And, as the prompter breathes, the puppet squeaks;  
 Or at the ear of *Eve*, familiar Toad,  
 Half froth, half venom, spits himself abroad,  
 In puns, or politics, or tales, or lies,  
 Or spite, or smut, or rhymes, or blasphemies.  
 His wit all see-saw, between *that* and *this*,  
 Now high, now low, now master up, now miss,  
 And he himself one vile Antithesis. }  
 Amphibious thing! that acting either part,  
 The trifling head or the corrupted heart,  
 Fop at the toilet, flatt'rer at the board,  
 Now trips a Lady, and now struts a Lord.  
*Eve's* tempter thus the Rabbins have exprest,  
 A cherub's face, a reptile all the rest;  
 Beauty that shocks you, parts that none will trust;  
 Wit that can creep, and pride that licks the dust.

<sup>1</sup>Lord Hervey. 'Sporus', otherwise 'Fanny', 'Lord Fanny' and 'Narcissus'. The effeminate and brilliant favourite of Queen Caroline, and author of the incomparable *Memoirs*, had supported Lady Mary Wortley Montagu in her bitter quarrel with Pope.

<sup>2</sup>Lord Hervey was an invalid, and asses' milk was an important item in his diet.

Not Fortune's worshipper, nor fashion's fool,  
 Not Lucre's madman, nor Ambition's tool,  
 Not proud, nor servile;—be one Poet's praise,  
 That, if he pleas'd, he pleas'd by manly ways:  
 That Flatt'ry, ev'n to Kings, he held a shame,  
 And thought a Lie in verse or prose the same.  
 That not in Fancy's maze he wander'd long,  
 But stoop'd to Truth, and moraliz'd his song:  
 That not for Fame, but Virtue's better end,  
 He stood the furious foe, the timid friend,  
 The damning critic, half approving wit,  
 The coxcomb hit, or fearing to be hit;  
 Laugh'd at the loss of friends he never had,  
 The dull, the proud, the wicked, and the mad;  
 The distant threats of vengeance on his head,  
 The blow unfelt, the tear he never shed;  
 The tale reviv'd, the lie so oft o'erthrown,  
 Th' imputed trash, and dulness not his own;  
 The morals blacken'd when the writings scape,  
 The libell'd person, and the pictur'd shape;  
 Abuse, on all he lov'd, or lov'd him, spread,  
 A friend in exile, or a father, dead;  
 The whisper, that to greatness still too near,  
 Perhaps, yet vibrates on his SOV'REIGN'S ear:—  
 Welcome for thee, fair *Virtue!* all the past;  
 For thee, fair *Virtue!* welcome ev'n the *last!*

*A.* But why insult the poor, affront the great?

*P.* A knave's a knave, to me, in ev'ry state:  
 Alike my scorn, if he succeed or fail,  
*Sporus* at court, or *Japhet* in a jail,  
 A hireling scribbler, or a hireling peer,  
 Knight of the post corrupt, or of the shire;  
 If on a Pillory, or near a Throne,  
 He gain his Prince's ear, or lose his own.

Yet soft by nature, more a dupe than wit,  
*Sappho* can tell you how this man was bit;  
 This dreaded Sat'rist *Dennus* will confess  
 Foe to his pride, but friend to his distress:  
 So humble, he has knock'd at *Tibbald's* door,  
 Has drunk with *Cibber*, nay has rhym'd for *Moore*.  
 Full ten years slander'd, did he once reply?  
 Three thousand suns went down on *Welsted's* lie.<sup>1</sup>  
 To please a Mistress one aspers'd his life;  
 He lash'd him not, but let her be his wife.  
 Let *Budgel* charge low *Grubstreet* on his quill,<sup>2</sup>  
 And write whate'er he pleas'd, except his Will;  
 Let the two *Curlls* of Town and Court, abuse  
 His father, mother, body, soul, and muse.  
 Yet why? that Father held it for a rule,  
 It was a sin to call our neighbour fool:  
 That harmless Mother thought no wife a whore:  
 Hear this, and spare his family, *James Moore!*  
 Unspotted names, and memorable long!  
 If there be force in Virtue, or in Song.

Of gentle blood (part shed in Honour's cause,  
 While yet in *Britain* Honour had applause)  
 Each parent sprung— *A*. What fortune, pray?—

*P*. Their own,

And better got, than *Bestia's* from the throne.  
 Born to no Pride, inheriting no Strife,  
 Nor marrying Discord in a noble wife,  
 Stranger to civil and religious rage,  
 The good man walk'd innoxious thro' his age.  
 Nor Courts he saw, no suits would ever try,  
 Nor dar'd an Oath, nor hazarded a Lie.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The author of an obscure libel against Pope.

<sup>2</sup>A weekly pamphleteer. He was also alleged to have forged a will.

<sup>3</sup>Pope, as a Catholic, was a nonjuror.

Un-learn'd, he knew no schoolman's subtle art,  
No language, but the language of the heart.  
By Nature honest, by Experience wise,  
Healthy by temp'rance, and by exercise;  
His life, tho' long, to sickness past unknown,  
His death was instant, and without a groan.  
O grant me, thus to live, and thus to die!  
Who sprung from Kings shall know less joy than I.

O Friend! may each domestic bliss be thine!  
Be no unpleasing Melancholy mine:  
Me, let the tender office long engage,  
To rock the cradle of reposing Age,  
With lenient arts extend a Mother's breath,  
Make Languor smile, and smooth the bed of Death,  
Explore the thought, explain the asking eye,  
And keep a while one parent from the sky!  
On cares like these if length of days attend,  
May Heav'n, to bless those days, preserve my friend,  
Preserve him social, cheerful, and serene,  
And just as rich as when he serv'd a QUEEN.

A. Whether that blessing be deny'd or giv'n,  
Thus far was right, the rest belongs to Heav'n.

IMITATIONS OF HORACE

THE FIRST SATIRE

OF THE

SECOND BOOK OF HORACE

TO MR. FORTESCUE

*P.* THERE are, (I scarce can think of it, but am told,)

There are, to whom my Satire seems too bold:  
Scarce to wise Peter complaisant enough,  
And something said of Chartres much too rough.  
The lines are weak, another's pleas'd to say,  
Lord Fanny<sup>1</sup> spins a thousand such a day.  
Tim'rous by nature, of the Rich in awe,  
I come to Counsel learned in the Law:  
You'll give me, like a friend both sage and free,  
Advice; and (as you use) without a Fee.

*F.* I'd write no more.

*P.* Not write? but then I think,

And for my soul I cannot sleep a wink.  
I nod in company, I wake at night,  
Fools rush into my head, and so I write.

*F.* You could not do a worse thing for your life.  
Why, if the nights seem tedious,—take a Wife:  
Or rather truly, if your point be rest,  
Lettuce and cowslip-wine; *Probatum est.*  
But talk with Celsus, Celsus will advise  
Hartshorn, or something that shall close your eyes.  
Or, if you needs must write, write CAESAR'S Praise,  
You'll gain at least a *Knighthood*, or the *Bays*.

*P.* What? Like Sir Richard, rumbling, rough, and fierce,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Lord Hervey.   <sup>2</sup>Sir Richard Blackmore.



With ARMS, and GEORGE, and BRUNSWICK crowd  
the verse,

Rend with tremendous sound your ears asunder,  
With Gun, Drum, Trumpet, Blunderbuss, and  
Thunder?

Or nobly wild, with Budget's fire and force,<sup>1</sup>  
Paint Angels trembling round his falling Horse?<sup>2</sup>

*F.* Then all your Muse's softer art display,  
Let CAROLINA smooth the tuneful lay,<sup>3</sup>  
Lull with AMELIA's<sup>4</sup> liquid name the Nine,  
And sweetly flow thro' all the Royal Line.

*P.* Alas! few verses touch their nicer ear;  
They scarce can bear their *Laureate* twice a year;<sup>5</sup>  
And justly CAESAR scorns the Poet's lays:  
It is to *History* he trusts for Praise.

*F.* Better be Cibber, I'll maintain it still,  
Than ridicule all Taste, blaspheme Quadrille,  
Abuse the City's best good men in metre,  
And laugh at Peers that put their trust in Peter.  
Ev'n those you touch not, hate you.

*P.* What should ail them?

*F.* A hundred smart in Timon and in Balaam:  
The fewer still you name, you wound the more;  
Bond is but one, but Harpax is a score.

*P.* Each mortal has his pleasure: none deny  
Scarsdale his bottle, Darty his Ham-pie;<sup>6</sup>  
Ridotta sips and dances, till she see  
The doubling Lustres dance as fast as she;

<sup>1</sup>For Budget, see *Prologue to the Satires*, p. 171.

<sup>2</sup>George II's horse had fallen at the battle of Oudenarde.

<sup>3</sup>Queen Caroline, whom Pope distrusted as a supporter of Sir Robert Walpole.

<sup>4</sup>Princess Amelia, second daughter of George II.

<sup>5</sup>Colley Cibber.

<sup>6</sup>Charles Darteneuf was a celebrated epicure.

F— loves the Senate,<sup>1</sup> Hockley-hole<sup>2</sup> his brother,  
 Like in all else, as one Egg to another.  
 I love to pour out all my self, as plain  
 As downright SHIPPEN,<sup>3</sup> or as old Montaigne:  
 In them, as certain to be lov'd as seen,  
 The Soul stood forth, nor kept a thought within;  
 In me what spots (for spots I have) appear,  
 Will prove at least the medium must be clear.  
 In this impartial glass, my Muse intends  
 Fair to expose myself, my foes, my friends;  
 Publish the present age; but where my text  
 Is Vice too high, reserve it for the next:  
 My foes shall wish my Life a longer date,  
 And ev'ry friend the less lament my fate.  
 My head and heart thus flowing thro' my quill,  
 Verse-man or Prose-man, term me which you will,  
 Papist or Protestant, or both between,  
 Like good Erasmus in an honest Mean,  
 In moderation placing all my glory,  
 While Tories call me Whig, and Whigs a Tory.  
 Satire's my weapon, but I'm too discreet  
 To run a muck, and tilt at all I meet;  
 I only wear it in a land of Hectors,  
 Thieves, Supercargoes, Sharpers, and Directors.  
 Save but our *Army!* and Let Jove encrust  
 Swords, pikes, and guns, with everlasting rust!  
 Peace is my dear delight—not FLEURY's more:<sup>4</sup>  
 But touch me, and no Minister so sore.  
 Whoe'er offends, at some unlucky time

<sup>1</sup>Henry Fox, first Lord Holland, brother to Stephen Fox, afterwards Lord Ilchester.

<sup>2</sup>A bear-garden.

<sup>3</sup>Wilham Shippen, a Jacobite politician with a reputation for incorruptibility.

<sup>4</sup>Cardinal Fleury, Prime Minister of France from 1726 to 1743.

Slides into verse, and hitches in a rhyme,  
 Sacred to Ridicule his whole life long,  
 And the sad burthen of some merry song.

Slander or Poison dread from Delia's rage,<sup>1</sup>  
 Hard words or hanging, if your Judge be Page.  
 From furious Sappho scarce a milder fate,  
 P-x'd by her love, or libell'd by her hate.  
 Its proper pow'r to hurt, each creature feels;  
 Bulls aim their horns, and Asses lift their heels;  
 'Tis a Bear's talent not to kick, but hug;  
 And no man wonders he's not stung by Pug.  
 So drink with Walters, or with Chartres eat,  
 They'll never poison you, they'll only cheat.

Then, learned Sir! (to cut the matter short)  
 Whate'er my fate,—or well or ill at Court,  
 Whether Old age, with faint but cheerful ray,  
 Attends to gild the Ev'ning of my day,  
 Or Death's black wing already be display'd,  
 To wrap me in the universal shade;  
 Whether the darken'd room to muse invite,  
 Or whiten'd wall provoke the skew'r to write:  
 In durance, exile, Bedlam or the Mint;—  
 Like Lee<sup>a</sup> or Budgel, I will rhyme and print.

*F.* Alas young man! your days can ne'er be long,  
 In flow'r of age you perish for a song!  
 Plums and Directors, Shylock and his Wife,  
 Will club their Testers, now, to take your life!

*P.* What? arm'd for Virtue when I point the pen,  
 Brand the bold front of shameless guilty men;  
 Dash the proud Gamester in his gilded Car;  
 Bare the mean Heart that lurks beneath a *Star*;

<sup>1</sup>The allusion is supposed to be to Lady Deloraine, who was suspected of poisoning a rival.

<sup>a</sup>Nathaniel Lee, the poet, went mad in 1684.

Can there be wanting, to defend Her cause,  
 Lights of the Church, or Guardians of the Laws?  
 Could pension'd Boileau lash in honest strain  
 Flatt'ers and Bigots ev'n in Louis' reign?  
 Could Laureate Dryden Pimp and Friar engage,  
 Yet neither Charles nor James be in a rage?  
 And I not strip the gilding off a knave,  
 Unplac'd, unpension'd, no man's heir, or slave?  
 I will, or perish in the gen'rous cause:  
 Hear this, and tremble! you, who 'scape the Laws.  
 Yes, while I live, no rich or noble knave  
 Shall walk the World, in credit, to his grave.  
 TO VIRTUE ONLY and HER FRIENDS A FRIEND,  
 The World beside may murmur, or commend.  
 Know, all the distant din that world can keep,  
 Rolls o'er my Grotto, and but soothes my sleep.  
 There, my retreat the best Companions grace,  
 Chiefs out of war, and Statesmen out of place.  
 There ST. JOHN mingles with my friendly bowl  
 The Feast of Reason and the Flow of Soul:  
 And HE, whose lightning pierc'd th' Iberian Lines,<sup>1</sup>  
 Now forms my Quincunx, and now ranks my Vines,  
 Or tames the Genius of the stubborn plain,  
 Almost as quickly as he conquer'd Spain.

*Envy* must own, I live among the Great,  
 No Pimp of Pleasure, and no Spy of State.  
 With eyes that pry not, tongue that ne'er repeats,  
 Fond to spread friendships, but to cover heats;  
 To help who want, to forward who excel;  
 This, all who know me, know; who love me, tell;  
 And who unknown defame me, let them be  
 Scribblers or Peers, alike are *Mob* to me.  
 This is my plea, on this I rest my cause—

<sup>1</sup>Lord Peterborough, a distinguished soldier and genial eccentric.

What saith my Counsel, learned in the laws?

*F.* Your Plea is good; but still I say, beware!  
Laws are explain'd by Men—so have a care.  
It stands on record, that in Richard's times  
A man was hang'd for very honest rhymes.  
Consult the Statute: *quart.* I think, it is,  
*Edwardi sext.* or *prim. et quint. Eliz.*  
See *Libels, Satires*—here you have it—read.

*P.* *Libels* and *Satires*! lawless things indeed!  
But grave *Epistles*, bringing Vice to light,  
Such as a King might read, a Bishop write;  
Such as Sir ROBERT would approve——

*F.* Indeed?

The Case is alter'd—you may then proceed;  
In such a cause the Plaintiff will be hiss'd;  
My Lords the Judges laugh, and you're dismiss'd.

THE SECOND SATIRE  
OF THE  
SECOND BOOK OF HORACE

TO MR. BETHEL

WHAT, and how great, the Virtue and the Art  
To live on little with a cheerful heart,  
(A doctrine sage, but truly none of mine,)  
Let's talk, my friends, but talk before we dine.  
Not when a gilt Buffet's reflected pride  
Turns you from sound Philosophy aside;  
Not when from plate to plate your eyeballs roll,  
And the brain dances to the mantling bowl.

Hear BETHEL's Sermon, one not vers'd in schools,  
But strong in sense, and wise without the rules.

Go work, hunt, exercise! (he thus began)  
 Then scorn a homely dinner, if you can.  
 Your wine lock'd up, your Butler stroll'd abroad,  
 Or fish deny'd (the river yet unthaw'd),  
 If then plain bread and milk will do the feat,  
 The pleasure lies in you, and not the meat.

Preach as I please, I doubt our curious men  
 Will choose a pheasant still before a hen;  
 Yet hens in Guinea full as good I hold,  
 Except you eat the feathers green and gold.  
 Of carps and mullets why prefer the great,  
 (Tho' cut in pieces ere my Lord can eat)  
 Yet for small Turbots such esteem profess?  
 Because God made these large, the other less.

Oldfield<sup>1</sup> with more than Harpy throat endued,  
 Cries 'Send me, Gods! a whole Hog barbecued!  
 Oh blast it, South-winds! till a stench exhale  
 Rank as the ripeness of a rabbit's tail.  
 By what Criterion do ye eat, d'ye think,  
 If this is priz'd for sweetness, that for stink?  
 When the tir'd glutton labours thro' a treat,  
 He finds no relish in the sweetest meat,  
 He calls for something bitter, something sour,  
 And the rich feast concludes extremely poor:  
 Cheap eggs, and herbs, and olives still we see;  
 Thus much is left of old Simplicity!  
 The Robin-red-breast till of late had rest,  
 And children sacred held a Martin's nest,  
 Till Becca-ficos sold so dev'lish dear  
 To one that was, or would have been a Peer.  
 Let me extol a Cat, on oysters fed,  
 I'll have a party at the Bedford-head,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>An eminent glutton, who exhausted an ample patrimony 'in the simple luxury of good eating'.

<sup>2</sup>In Covent Garden.

Or ev'n to crack live Crawfish recommend;  
I'd never doubt at Court to make a friend.

'Tis yet in vain, I own, to keep a pother  
About one vice, and fall into the other:  
Between Excess and Famine lies a mean;  
Plain, but not sordid; tho' not splendid, clean.

Avidien<sup>1</sup> or his Wife (no matter which,  
For him you'll call a dog, and her a bitch)  
Sell their presented partridges, and fruits,  
And humbly live on rabbits and on roots:  
One half-pint bottle serves them both to dine,  
And is at once their vinegar and wine.  
But on some lucky day (as when they found  
A lost Bank-bill, or heard their Son was drown'd)  
At such a feast, old vinegar to spare,  
Is what two souls so gen'rous cannot bear:  
Oil, tho' it stink, they drop by drop impart,  
But souse the cabbage with a bounteous heart.

He knows to live, who keeps the middle state,  
And neither leans on this side, nor on that;  
Nor stops, for one bad cork, his butler's pay,  
Swears, like Albutius, a good cook away;  
Nor lets, like Naevius, ev'ry error pass,  
The musty wine, foul cloth, or greasy glass.

Now hear what blessings Temperance can bring:  
(Thus said our friend, and what he said I sing,)  
First Health: The stomach (cramm'd from ev'ry dish,  
A tomb of boil'd and roast, and flesh and fish,  
Where bile, and wind, and phlegm, and acid jar,  
And all the man is one intestine war)  
Remembers oft the School-boy's simple fare,

<sup>1</sup>Edward Wortley Montagu, husband of Pope's enemy, Lady Mary: their son was a difficult and irresponsible character, who afterwards became a Mahomedan.

The temp'rate sleeps, and spirits light as air.

How pale, each Worshipful and Rev'rend guest  
Rise from a Clergy, or a City feast!  
What life in all that ample bode, say?  
What heav'nly particle inspires the clay?  
The Soul subsides, and wickedly inclines  
To seem but mortal, ev'n in sound Divines.

On morning wings how active springs the Mind  
That leaves the load of yesterday behind!  
How easy ev'ry labour it pursues!  
How coming to the Poet ev'ry Muse!  
Not but we may exceed, some holy time,  
Or tir'd in search of Truth, or search of Rhyme;  
Ill health some just indulgence may engage,  
And more the sickness of long life, Old age;  
For fainting Age what cordial drop remains,  
If our intemp'rate Youth the vessel drains?

Our fathers prais'd rank Ven'son. You suppose  
Perhaps, young men! our fathers had no nose.  
Not so: a Buck was then a week's repast,  
And 'twas their point, I ween, to make it last;  
More pleas'd to keep it till their friends could come,  
Than eat the sweetest by themselves at home.  
Why had not I in those good times my birth,  
Ere coxcomb-pies or coxcombs were on earth?

Unworthy he, the voice of Fame to hear,  
That sweetest music to an honest ear;  
(For 'faith, Lord Fanny! you are in the wrong,  
The world's good word is better than a song)  
Who has not learned, fresh sturgeon and ham-pie  
Are no rewards for want, and infamy!  
When Luxury has lick'd up all thy pelf,  
Curs'd by thy neighbours, thy trustees, thyself,  
To friends, to fortune, to mankind a shame,



Think how posterity will treat thy name;  
 And buy a rope, that future times may tell  
 Thou hast at least bestow'd one penny well.

'Right,' cried his Lordship, 'for a rogue in need  
 'To have a Taste is insolence indeed:

'In me 'tis noble, suits my birth and state,  
 'My wealth unwieldy, and my heap too great.'  
 Then, like the Sun, let Bounty spread her ray,  
 And shine that superfluity away.

Oh Impudence of wealth! with all thy store,  
 How dar'st thou let one worthy man be poor?  
 Shall half the new-built churches round thee fall?  
 Make Quays, build Bridges, or repair White-hall:  
 Or to thy country let that heap be lent,  
 As M\*\*o's<sup>1</sup> was, but not at five per cent.

Who thinks that Fortune cannot change her mind,  
 Prepares a dreadful jest for all mankind.  
 And who stands safest? tell me, is it he  
 That spreads and swells in puff'd prosperity,  
 Or blest with little, whose preventing care  
 In peace provides fit arms against a war?

Thus BETHEL spoke, who always speaks his  
 thought,

And always thinks the very thing he ought:  
 His equal mind I copy what I can,  
 And, as I love, would imitate the Man.  
 In South-sea days not happier, when surmis'd  
 The Lord of Thousands, than if now *Excis'd*;  
 In forest planted by a Father's hand,  
 Than in five acres now of rented land.  
 Content with little, I can piddle here  
 On brocoli and mutton, round the year;  
 But ancient friends (tho' poor, or out of play)

<sup>1</sup>The Duke of Marlborough.

That touch my bell, I cannot turn away.  
 'Tis true, no Turbots dignify my boards,  
 But gudgeons, flounders, what my Thames affords:  
 To Hounslow-heath I point and Bansted-down,  
 Thence comes your mutton, and these chicks my own:  
 From yon old walnut-tree a show'r shall fall;  
 And grapes, long ling'ring on my only wall,  
 And figs from standard and espalier join;  
 The dev'l is in you if you cannot dine:  
 Then cheerful healths (your Mistress shall have  
 place),  
 And, what's more rare, a Poet shall say Grace.

Fortune not much of humbling me can boast;  
 Tho' double tax'd, how little have I lost?  
 My Life's amusements have been just the same,  
 Before, and after, Standing Armies came.  
 My lands are sold, my father's house is gone;  
 I'll hire another's; is not that my own,  
 And yours, my friends? thro' whose free-opening gate  
 None comes too early, none departs too late;  
 (For I, who hold sage Homer's rule the best,  
 Welcome the coming, speed the going guest.)  
 'Pray heav'n it last!' (cries SWIFT!) 'as you go on;  
 'I wish to God this house had been your own:  
 'Pity! to build, without a son or wife:  
 'Why, you'll enjoy it only all your life.'  
 Well, if the use be mine, can it concern one,  
 Whether the name belong to Pope or Vernon?  
 What's *Property*? dear Swift! you see it alter  
 From you to me, from me to Peter Walter;  
 Or, in a mortgage, prove a Lawyer's share;  
 Or, in a jointure, vanish from the heir;  
 Or in pure equity (the case not clear)  
 The Chanc'ry takes your rents for twenty year:

At best, it falls to some ungracious son,  
 Who cries, 'My father's damn'd, and all's my own'.  
 Shades, that to BACON could retreat afford,  
 Become the portion of a booby Lord;  
 And Hemsley, once proud Buckingham's delight,  
 Slides to a Scriv'ner or a city Knight.  
 Let lands and houses have what Lords they will,  
 Let Us be fix'd, and our own masters still.

THE FIRST EPISTLE  
 OF THE  
 FIRST BOOK OF HORACE  
 TO LORD BOLINGBROKE

ST. JOHN, whose love indulg'd my labours past,  
 Matures my present, and shall bound my last!  
 Why will you break the Sabbath of my days?  
 Now sick alike of Envy and of Praise.  
 Public too long, ah let me hide my Age!  
 See, Modest Cibber now has left the Stage:  
 Our Gen'ral's now, retir'd to their Estates,  
 Hang their old Trophies o'er the Garden gates,  
 In Life's cool Ev'ning satiate of Applause,  
 Nor fond of bleeding, ev'n in BRUNSWICK'S cause.

A Voice there is, that whispers in my ear,  
 ('Tis Reason's voice, which sometimes one can hear)  
 'Friend Pope! be prudent, let your Muse take breath,  
 'And never gallop Pegasus to death;  
 'Lest stiff, and stately, void of fire or force,  
 'You limp, like Blackmore on a Lord Mayor's horse.'

Farewell then Verse, and Love, and ev'ry Toy,  
 The Rhymes and Rattles of the Man or Boy;  
 What right, what true, what fit we justly call,  
 Let this be all my care—for this is All:

---

To lay this harvest up, and hoard with haste  
What ev'ry day will want, and most, the last.

But ask not, to what Doctors I apply?  
Sworn to no Master, of no Sect am I:  
As drives the storm, at any door I knock:  
And house with Montaigne now, or now with Locke.  
Sometimes a Patriot, active in debate,  
Mix with the World, and battle for the State,  
Free as young Lyttelton, her Cause pursue,  
Still true to Virtue, and as warm as true:  
Sometimes with Aristippus, or St. Paul,  
Indulge my candor, and grow all to all;  
Back to my native Moderation slide,  
And win my way by yielding to the tide.

Long, as to him who works for debt, the day,  
Long as the Night to her whose Love's away,  
Long as the Year's dull circle seems to run,  
When the brisk Minor pants for twenty-one:  
So slow th' unprofitable moments roll,  
That lock up all the Functions of my soul;  
That keep me from myself; and still delay  
Life's instant business to a future day:  
That task, which as we follow, or despise,  
The eldest is a fool, the youngest wise;  
Which done, the poorest can no wants endure;  
And which not done, the richest must be poor.

Late as it is, I put myself to school,  
And feel some comfort, not to be a fool.  
Weak tho' I am of limb, and short of sight,  
Far from a Lynx, and not a Giant quite;  
I'll do what Mead and Cheselden advise,  
To keep these limbs, and to preserve these eyes.  
Not to go back, is somewhat to advance,  
And men must walk at least before they dance.

Say, does thy blood rebel, thy bosom move  
 With wretched Av'rice, or as wretched Love?  
 Know, there are Words, and Spells, which can control  
 Between the Fits this Fever of the soul:  
 Know, there are Rhymes, which fresh and fresh  
 apply'd

Will cure the arrant'st Puppy of his Pride.  
 Be furious, envious, slothful, mad, or drunk,  
 Slave to a Wife, or Vassal to a Punk,  
 A Switz, a High-dutch, or a Low-dutch Bear;  
 All that we ask is but a patient Ear.

'Tis the first Virtue, Vices to abhor;  
 And the first Wisdom, to be Fool no more.  
 But to the world no bugbear is so great,  
 As want of figure, and a small Estate.  
 To either India see the Merchant fly,  
 Scar'd at the spectre of pale Poverty!  
 See him, with pains of body, pangs of soul,  
 Burn through the Tropic, freeze beneath the Pole!  
 Wilt thou do nothing for a nobler end,  
 Nothing, to make Philosophy thy friend?  
 To stop thy foolish views, thy long desires,  
 And ease thy heart of all that it admires?

Here, Wisdom calls: 'See Virtue first, be bold!  
 'As Gold to Silver, Virtue is to Gold.'  
 There, London's voice: 'Get Money, Money still!  
 'And then let Virtue follow, if she will.'  
 This, this the saving doctrine, preach'd to all,  
 From low St. James's up to high St. Paul;  
 From him whose quills stand quiver'd at his ear,  
 To him who notches sticks at Westminster.

Barnard in spirit, sense, and truth abounds;<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Sir John Barnard, City-member, financial authority and one-time Lord Mayor.

'Pray then, what wants he?' Fourscore thousand  
pounds;

A Pension, or such Harness for a slave  
As Bug now has, and Dorimant would have.  
Barnard, thou art a Cit, with all thy worth;  
But Bug and D\*l, Their *Honours*, and so forth.

Yet ev'ry child another song will sing:  
'Virtue, brave boys! 'tis Virtue makes a King.'  
True, conscious Honour is to feel no sin,  
He's arm'd without that's innocent within;  
Be this thy Screen, and this thy wall of Brass;  
Compar'd to this, a Minister's an Ass.

And say, to which shall our applause belong,  
This new Court jargon, or the good old song?  
The modern language of corrupted Peers,  
Or what was spoke at CRESSY and POITIERS?  
Who counsels best? who whispers, 'Be but great,  
'With Praise or Infamy leave that to fate;  
'Get Place and Wealth, if possible, with grace;  
'If not, by any means get Wealth and Place—'  
For what? to have a Box where Eunuchs sing,<sup>1</sup>  
And foremost in the Circle eye a King.

Or he, who bids thee face with steady view  
Proud Fortune, and look shallow Greatness thro': }  
And, while he bids thee, sets th' Example too? }  
If such a Doctrine, in St. James's air,  
Shou'd chance to make the well-drest Rabble stare;  
If honest S\*z<sup>2</sup> take scandal at a Spark,  
That less admires the Palace than the Park:  
Faith I shall give the answer Reynard gave:

<sup>1</sup>The Italian opera, of which the *castrato* singer, Farnelli, was one of the greatest ornaments, enjoyed an immense success in London during Pope's lifetime.

<sup>2</sup>Augustus Schutz, one of George II's most trusted Hanoverian attendants.

‘I cannot like, dread Sir, your Royal Cave:  
 ‘Because I see, by all the tracks about,  
 ‘Full many a Beast goes in, but none come out.’  
 Adieu to Virtue, if you’re once a Slave:  
 Send her to Court, you send her to her grave.

Well, if a King’s a Lion, at the least  
 The People are a many-headed Beast:  
 Can they direct what measures to pursue,  
 Who know themselves so little what to do?  
 Alike in nothing but one Lust of Gold,  
 Just half the land would buy, and half be sold:  
 Their Country’s wealth our mightier Misers drain,  
 Or cross, to plunder Provinces, the Main;  
 The rest, some farm the Poor-box, some the Pews;  
 Some keep Assemblies, and would keep the Stews;  
 Some with fat Bucks on childless dotards fawn;  
 Some win rich Widows by their Chine and Brawn;  
 While with the silent growth of ten per cent,  
 In dirt and darkness, hundreds stink content.

Of all these ways, if each pursues his own,  
 Satire be kind, and let the wretch alone:  
 But shew me one who has it in his pow’r  
 To act consistent with himself an hour.  
 Sir Job sail’d forth, the ev’ning bright and still,  
 ‘No place on earth (he cry’d) like Greenwich hill!’  
 Up starts a Palace; lo, th’ obedient base  
 Slopes at its foot, the woods its sides embrace,  
 The silver Thames reflects its marble face. }  
 Now let some whimsy, or that Dev’l within  
 Which guides all those who know not what they }  
 mean,  
 But give the Knight (or give his Lady) spleen;  
 ‘Away, away! take all your scaffolds down,  
 ‘For Snug’s the word: My dear! we’ll live in Town.’

At am'rous Flavio is the stocking thrown?  
 That very night he longs to lie alone.  
 The Fool, whose Wife elopes some thrice a quarter,  
 For matrimonial solace dies a martyr.  
 Did ever Proteus, Merlin, any witch,  
 Transform themselves so strangely as the Rich?  
 Well, but the Poor—The Poor have the same itch; }  
 They change their weekly Barber, weekly News,  
 Prefer a new Japanner to their shoes,  
 Discharge their Garrets, move their beds, and run  
 (They know not whither) in a Chaise and one;  
 They hire their sculler, and when once aboard,  
 Grow sick, and damn the climate—like a Lord.

You laugh, half Beau, half Sloven if I stand,  
 My wig all powder, and all snuff my band;  
 You laugh, if coat and breeches strangely vary,  
 White gloves, and linen worthy Lady Mary!  
 But when no Prelate's Lawn with hair-shirt lin'd,  
 Is half so incoherent as my Mind,  
 When (each opinion with the next at strife,  
 One ebb and flow of follies all my life)  
 I plant, root up; I build, and then confound;  
 Turn round to square, and square again to round;  
 You never change one muscle of your face,  
 You think this Madness but a common case,  
 Nor once to Chanc'ry, nor to Hale<sup>1</sup> apply;  
 Yet hang your lip, to see a Seam awry!  
 Careless how ill I with myself agree,  
 Kind to my dress, my figure, not to Me.  
 Is this my Guide, Philosopher, and Friend?  
 This, he who loves me, and who ought to mend?  
 Who ought to make me (what he can, or none,)  
 That Man divine whom Wisdom calls her own;

<sup>1</sup>A physician renowned for his treatment of mental disorders.



Great without Title, without Fortune bless'd;  
 Rich ev'n when plunder'd, honour'd while oppress'd;  
 Lov'd without youth, and follow'd without pow'r;  
 At home, tho' exil'd; free, tho' in the Tower;  
 In short, that reas'ning, high, immortal Thing,  
 Just less than Jove, and much above a King,  
 Nay, half in heav'n—except (what's mighty odd)  
 A Fit of Vapours clouds this Demi-God.

THE SIXTH EPISTLE  
 OF THE  
 FIRST BOOK OF HORACE

TO MR MURRAY

'NOT to admire, is all the Art I know,  
 'To make men happy, and to keep them so.'  
 (Plain truth, dear MURRAY, needs no flow'rs of  
 speech,

So take it in the very words of Creech.<sup>1</sup>)

This Vault of Air, this congregated Ball,  
 Self-center'd Sun, and Stars that rise and fall,  
 There are, my Friend! whose philosophic eyes  
 Look thro', and trust the Ruler with his skies,  
 To him commit the hour, the day, the year,  
 And view this dreadful All without a fear.  
 Admire we then what Earth's low entrails hold,  
 Arabian shores, or Indian seas infold; }  
 All the mad trade of Fools and Slaves for Gold?  
 Or Popularity? or Stars and Strings?  
 The Mob's applauses, or the gifts of Kings?  
 Say with what eyes we ought at Courts to gaze,  
 And pay the Great our homage of Amaze?

<sup>1</sup>Richard Creech, translator of Horace and Lucretius.

If weak the pleasure that from these can spring,  
 The fear to want them is as weak a thing:  
 Whether we dread, or whether we desire,  
 In either case, believe me, we admire;  
 Whether we joy or grieve, the same the curse,  
 Surpris'd at better, or surpris'd at worse.  
 Thus good or bad, to one extreme betray  
 Th' unbalanc'd Mind, and snatch the Man away;  
 For Virtue's self may too much zeal be had;  
 The worst of Madmen is a Saint run mad.

Go then, and if you can, admire the state  
 Of beaming diamonds, and reflected plate;  
 Procure a TASTE to double the surprise,  
 And gaze on Parian Charms with learned eyes:  
 Be struck with bright Brocade, or Tyrian Dye,  
 Our Birth-day Nobles' splendid Livery.  
 If not so pleas'd, at Council-board rejoice,  
 To see their Judgments hang upon thy Voice;  
 From morn to night, at Senate, Rolls, and Hall,  
 Plead much, read more, dine late, or not at all.  
 But wherefore all this labour, all this strife?  
 For Fame, for Riches, for a noble Wife?  
 Shall One whom Nature, Learning, Birth, conspir'd  
 To form, not to admire but be admir'd,  
 Sigh, while his Chloe blind to Wit and Worth  
 Weds the rich Dulness of some Son of earth?  
 Yet Time ennobles, or degrades each Line;  
 It brighten'd *Craggs's*,<sup>1</sup> and may darken thine:  
 And what is Fame? the Meanest have their Day,  
 The Greatest can but blaze, and pass away.  
 Grac'd as thou art, with all the Pow'r of Words,

<sup>1</sup>James Craggs, the younger: Secretary of State and adroit parliamentarian. Though Pope had a high regard for his virtues, he was somewhat unfortunately involved in the affairs of the South Sea Company.

So known, so honour'd, at the House of Lords:  
 Conspicuous Scene! another yet is nigh,  
 (More silent far) where Kings and Poets lie;  
 Where MURRAY (long enough his Country's pride)  
 Shall be no more than TULLY, or than HYDE!<sup>1</sup>

Rack'd with Sciatics, martyr'd with the Stone,  
 Will any mortal let himself alone?  
 See Ward by batter'd Beaux invited over,  
 And desp'rate Misery lays hold on Dover.<sup>2</sup>  
 The case is easier in the Mind's disease;  
 There all Men may be cur'd, whene'er they please.  
 Would ye be blest? despise low Joys, low Gains;  
 Disdain whatever CORNBURY<sup>3</sup> disdains;  
 Be virtuous, and be happy for your pains. }

But art thou one, whom new opinions sway,  
 One who believes as Tindal<sup>4</sup> leads the way,  
 Who Virtue and a Church alike disowns,  
 Thinks that but words, and this but brick and stones?  
 Fly then, on all the wings of wild desire,  
 Admire whate'er the maddest can admire.  
 Is Wealth thy passion? Hence! from Pole to Pole,  
 Where winds can carry, or where waves can roll,  
 For Indian spices, for Peruvian Gold,  
 Prevent the greedy, and out-bid the bold:  
 Advance thy golden Mountain to the skies;  
 On the broad base of fifty thousand rise,  
 Add one round hundred, and (if that's not fair)  
 Add fifty more, and bring it to a square.  
 For, mark th' advantage; just so many score

<sup>1</sup>The famous Lord Clarendon.

<sup>2</sup>Ward and Dover were well-known quacks.

<sup>3</sup>Lord Cornbury was a Tory nobleman of literary tastes and exemplary public character.

<sup>4</sup>Dr. Matthew Tindal, author of *Christianity as old as the Creation*.

Will gain a Wife with half as many more,  
 Procure her Beauty, make that beauty chaste,  
 And then such Friends—as cannot fail to last.  
 A Man of wealth is dubb'd a Man of worth,  
 Venus shall give him Form, and Anstis Birth.  
 (Believe me, many a German Prince is worse,  
 Who proud of Pedigree, is poor of Purse.)  
 His Wealth brave Timon gloriously confounds;  
 Ask'd for a groat, he gives a hundred pounds;  
 Or if three Ladies like a luckless Play,  
 Takes the whole House upon the Poet's Day.  
 Now, in such exigencies not to need,  
 Upon my word, you must be rich indeed;  
 A noble superfluity it craves,  
 Not for yourself, but for your Fools and Knaves;  
 Something, which for your Honour they may cheat,  
 And which it much becomes you to forget.  
 If Wealth alone then make and keep us blest,  
 Still, still be getting, never, never rest.

But if to Pow'r and Place your passion lie,  
 If in the Pomp of Life consist the joy;  
 Then hire a Slave, or (if you will) a Lord  
 To do the Honours, and to give the Word;  
 Tell at your Levee, as the Crowds approach,  
 To whom to nod, whom take into your Coach,  
 Whom honour with your hand: to make remarks,  
 Who rules in Cornwall, or who rules in Berks:  
 'This may be troublesome, is near the Chair;  
 'That makes three members, this can choose a May'r.'  
 Instructed thus, you bow, embrace, protest,  
 Adopt him Son, or Cousin at the least,  
 Then turn about, and laugh at your own Jest. }

Or if your life be one continu'd Treat,  
 If to live well means nothing but to eat;

Up, up! cries Gluttony, 'tis break of day,  
 Go drive the Deer, and drag the finny prey;  
 With hounds and horns go hunt an Appetite—  
 So Russel did, but could not eat at night,  
 Call'd happy Dog! the Beggar at his door,  
 And envy'd Thirst and Hunger to the Poor.

Or shall we ev'ry Decency confound,  
 Thro' Taverns, Stews, and Bagnio's take our round,  
 Go dine with Chartres, in each Vice out-do  
 K—l's lewd Cargo, or Ty—y's Crew,<sup>1</sup>  
 From Latian Syrens, French Circean Feasts,  
 Return well travell'd, and transform'd to Beasts,  
 Or for a Titled Punk, or foreign Flame,  
 Renounce our Country, and degrade our Name?

If, after all, we must with Wilmot own,  
 The Cordial Drop of Life is Love alone,  
 And SWIFT cry wisely, 'Vive la Bagatelle!'  
 The Man that loves and laughs, must sure do well.  
 Adieu—if this advice appear the worst,  
 E'en take the Counsel which I gave you first:  
 Or better Precepts if you can impart,  
 Why do, I'll follow them with all my heart.

THE FIRST EPISTLE  
 OF THE  
 SECOND BOOK OF HORACE

TO AUGUSTUS

WHILE you, great Patron of Mankind! sustain  
 The balanc'd World, and open all the Main;  
 Your Country, chief, in Arms abroad defend,  
 At home, with Morals, Arts, and Laws amend;

<sup>1</sup>Lords Kinnoul and Tyrawley, two exceptionally dissolute ambassadors.

How shall the Muse, from such a Monarch, steal  
An hour, and not defraud the Public Weal?

Edward and Henry, now the Boast of Fame,  
And virtuous Alfred, a more sacred Name,  
After a Life of gen'rous Toils endur'd,  
The Gaul subdu'd, or Property secur'd,  
Ambition humbled, mighty Cities storm'd,  
Or Laws establish'd, and the world reform'd;  
Clos'd their long Glories with a sigh, to find  
Th' unwilling Gratitude of base mankind!  
All human Virtue, to its latest breath,  
Finds Envy never conquer'd but by Death.  
The great Alcides, ev'ry Labour past,  
Had still this Monster to subdue at last.  
Sure fate of all, beneath whose rising ray  
Each star of meaner merit fades away!  
Oppress'd we feel the beam directly beat,  
Those Suns of Glory please not till they set.

To thee, the World its present homage pays,  
The Harvest early, but mature the praise:  
Great Friend of LIBERTY! in *Kings* a Name  
Above all Greek, above all Roman Fame:  
Whose Word is Truth, as sacred and rever'd,  
As Heav'n's own Oracles from Altars heard.  
Wonder of Kings! like whom, to mortal eyes  
None e'er has risen, and none e'er shall rise.

Just in one instance, be it yet confest  
Your People, Sir, are partial in the rest:  
Foes to all living worth except your own,  
And Advocates for folly dead and gone.  
Authors, like coins, grow dear as they grow old;  
It is the rust we value, not the gold.  
Chaucer's worst ribaldry is learn'd by rote,

And beastly Skelton Heads of Houses quote:<sup>1</sup>  
 One likes no language but the Faery Queen;  
 A Scot will fight for Christ's Kirk o' the Green;  
 And each true Briton is to Ben so civil,  
 He swears the Muses met him at the Devil.<sup>2</sup>

Tho' justly Greece her eldest sons admires,  
 Why should not We be wiser than our sires?  
 In ev'ry Public virtue we excel;  
 We build, we paint, we sing, we dance as well,  
 And learned Athens to our art must stoop,  
 Could she behold us tumbling thro' a hoop.

If Time improve our Wit as well as Wine,  
 Say at what age a Poet grows divine?  
 Shall we, or shall we not, account him so,  
 Who died, perhaps, a hundred years ago?  
 End all dispute; and fix the year precise  
 When British bards begin t' immortalize?

'Who lasts a century can have no flaw,  
 'I hold that Wit a Classic, good in law.'

Suppose he wants a year, will you compound?  
 And shall we deem him Ancient, right and sound,  
 Or damn to all eternity at once,  
 At ninety-nine, a Modern and a Dunce?

'We shall not quarrel for a year or two;  
 'By courtesy of England, he may do.'

Then by the rule that made the Horse-tail bare,  
 I pluck out year by year, as hair by hair,  
 And melt down Ancients like a heap of snow:  
 While you to measure merits, look in Stowe,  
 And estimating authors by the year,  
 Bestow a Garland only on a Bier.

<sup>1</sup>John Skelton, Poet Laureate to Henry VIII, a writer whose works display considerable originality, and far less obscurity than Pope pretended.      <sup>2</sup>The Devil Tavern, frequented by Ben Jonson.

Shakespear (whom you and ev'ry Play-house bill  
Style the divine, the matchless, what you will)  
For gain, not glory, wing'd his roving flight,  
And grew Immortal in his own despite.  
Ben, old and poor, as little seem'd to heed  
The Life to come, in ev'ry Poet's Creed.  
Who now reads Cowley? if he pleases yet,  
His Moral pleases, not his pointed wit;  
Forget his Epic, nay Pindaric Art;  
But still I love the language of his heart.

'Yet surely, surely, these were famous men!  
'What boy but hears the sayings of old Ben?  
'In all debates where Critics bear a part,  
'Not one but nods, and talks of Jonson's Art,  
'Of Shakespear's Nature, and of Cowley's Wit;  
'How Beaumont's judgment check'd what Fletcher writ;  
'How Shadwell hasty, Wycherley was slow;  
'But for the Passions, Southern sure and Rowe.  
'These, only these, support the crowded stage,  
'From eldest Heywood down to Cibber's age.'

All this may be; the People's Voice is odd,  
It is, and it is not, the voice of God.  
To Gammer Gurton if it give the bays,  
And yet deny the Careless Husband<sup>1</sup> praise,  
Or say our Fathers never broke a rule;  
Why then, I say, the Public is a fool.  
But let them own, that greater Faults than we  
They had, and greater Virtues, I'll agree.  
Spenser himself affects the Obsolete,  
And Sidney's verse halts ill on Roman feet:  
Milton's strong pinion now not Heav'n can bound,  
Now Serpent-like, in prose he sweeps the ground,

<sup>1</sup>*The Careless Husband*, a play by Colley Cibber.



In Quibbles Angel and Archangel join,  
 And God the Father turns a School-divine.  
 Not that I'd lop the Beauties from his book,  
 Like slashing Bentley with his desp'rate hook,  
 Or damn all Shakespear, like th' affected Fool  
 At court, who hates whate'er he read at school.

But for the Wits of either Charles's days,  
 The Mob of Gentlemen who wrote with Ease;  
 Sprat,<sup>1</sup> Carew, Sedley, and a hundred more,  
 (Like twinkling stars the Miscellanies o'er)  
 One Simile, that solitary shines  
 In the dry desert of a thousand lines,  
 Or lengthen'd Thought that gleams through many a  
 page,

Has sanctify'd whole poems for an age.  
 I lose my patience, and I own it too,  
 When works are censur'd, not as bad but new;  
 While if our Elders break all reason's laws,  
 These fools demand not pardon, but Applause.

On Avon's bank, where flow'rs eternal blow,  
 If I but ask, if any weed can grow;  
 One Tragic sentence if I dare deride  
 Which Betterton's grave action dignify'd,  
 Or well-mouth'd Booth with emphasis proclaims,  
 (Tho' but, perhaps, a muster-roll of Names)  
 How will our Fathers rise up in a rage,  
 And swear, all shame is lost in George's Age!  
 You'd think no Fools disgrac'd the former reign,  
 Did not some grave Examples yet remain,  
 Who scorn a Lad should teach his father skill,  
 And, having once been wrong, will be so still.  
 He, who to seem more deep than you or I,

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Sprat, Bishop of Rochester, one of the earliest members of the Royal Society.

Extols old Bards, or Merlin's Prophecy,  
Mistake him not; he envies, not admires,  
And to debase the Sons, exalts the Sires.  
Had ancient times conspir'd to disallow  
What then was new, what had been ancient now?  
Or what remain'd, so worthy to be read  
By learned Critics, of the mighty Dead?

In Days of Ease, when now the weary Sword  
Was sheath'd, and *Luxury* with *Charles* restor'd;  
In ev'ry taste of foreign Courts improv'd,  
'All, by the King's Example, liv'd and lov'd.'  
Then Peers grew proud in Horsemanship t' excel,  
Newmarket's Glory rose, as Britain's fell;  
The Soldier breath'd the Gallantries of France,  
And ev'ry flow'ry Courtier writ Romance.  
Then Marble, soften'd into life, grew warm:  
And yielding Metal flow'd to human form:  
Lely on animated Canvas stole  
The sleepy Eye, that spoke the melting soul.  
No wonder then, when all was Love and sport,  
The willing Muses were debauch'd at Court:  
On each enervate string they taught the note  
To pant, or tremble thro' an Eunuch's throat.

But Britain, changeful as a Child at play,  
Now calls in Princes, and now turns away.  
Now Whig, now Tory, what we lov'd we hate;  
Now all for Pleasure, now for Church and State;  
Now for Prerogative, and now for Laws;  
Effects unhappy from a Noble Cause.

Time was, a sober Englishman would knock  
His servants up, and rise by five o'clock,  
Instruct his Family in ev'ry rule,  
And send his Wife to church, his Son to school.  
To worship like his Fathers, was his care;

To teach their frugal Virtues to his Heir;  
 To prove, that Luxury could never hold;  
 And place, on good Security, his Gold.  
 Now times are chang'd, and one Poetic Itch  
 Has seiz'd the Court and City, poor and rich:  
 Sons, Sires, and Grandsires, all will wear the bays,  
 Our Wives read Milton, and our Daughters Plays,  
 To Theatres, and to Rehearsals throng,  
 And all our Grace at table is a Song.  
 I, who so oft renounce the Muses, lie,  
 Not —'s self e'er tells more *Fibs* than I;  
 When sick of Muse, our follies we deplore,  
 And promise our best Friends to rhyme no more;  
 We wake next morning in a raging fit,  
 And call for pen and ink to show our Wit.

He serv'd a 'Prenticeship, who sets up shop;  
 Ward try'd on Puppies, and the Poor, his Drop;  
 Ev'n Radcliff's Doctors travel first to France,  
 Nor dare to practise till they've learn'd to dance.  
 Who builds a Bridge that never drove a pile?  
 (Should Ripley<sup>1</sup> venture, all the world would smile)  
 But those who cannot write, and those who can,  
 All rhyme, and scrawl, and scribble, to a man.

Yet, Sir, reflect, the mischief is not great;  
 These Madmen never hurt the Church or State:  
 Sometimes the Folly benefits Mankind;  
 And rarely Av'rice taints the tuneful mind.  
 Allow him but his plaything of a Pen,  
 He ne'er rebels, or plots, like other men:  
 Flight of Cashiers, or Mobs, he'll never mind;  
 And knows no losses while the Muse is kind.  
 To cheat a Friend, or Ward, he leaves to Peter;  
 The good man heaps up nothing but mere metre,

<sup>1</sup>See *Moral Essays*, Epistle IV, p. 150.

Enjoys his Garden and his book in quiet;  
And then—a perfect Hermit in his diet.

Of little use the Man you may suppose,  
Who says in verse what others say in prose;  
Yet let me show, a Poet's of some weight,  
And (tho' no Soldier) useful to the State.  
What will a Child learn sooner than a Song?  
What better teach a Foreigner the tongue?  
What's long or short, each accent where to place,  
And speak in public with some sort of grace?  
I scarce can think him such a worthless thing,  
Unless he praise some Monster of a King;  
Or Virtue, or Religion turn to sport,  
To please a lewd or unbelieving Court.  
Unhappy Dryden!—In all Charles's days,  
Roscommon only boasts unspotted bays;  
And in our own (excuse some Courtly stains)  
No whiter page than Addison remains.  
He, from the taste obscene reclaims our youth,  
And sets the Passions on the side of Truth,  
Forms the soft bosom with the gentlest art,  
And pours each human Virtue in the heart.  
Let Ireland tell, how Wit upheld her cause,  
Her Trade supported, and supplied her Laws;  
And leave on SWIFT this grateful verse engrav'd:  
'The Rights a Court attack'd, a Poet sav'd.'  
Behold the hand that wrought a Nation's cure,  
Stretch'd to relieve the Idiot and the Poor,  
Proud Vice to brand, or injur'd Worth adorn,  
And stretch the Ray to Ages yet unborn.  
Not but there are, who merit other palms;  
Hopkins and Sternhold glad the heart with Psalms:<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The version of the Psalms by Thomas Sternhold and John Hopkins was first published in 1562.

The Boys and Girls whom charity maintains,  
 Implore your help in these pathetic strains:  
 How could Devotion touch the country pews,  
 Unless the Gods bestow'd a proper Muse?  
 Verse cheers their leisure, Verse assists their work,  
 Verse prays for Peace, or sings down Pope and Turk.  
 The silenc'd Preacher yields to potent strain,  
 And feels that grace his pray'r besought in vain;  
 The blessing thrills thro' all the lab'ring throng,  
 And Heav'n is won by Violence of Song,

Our rural Ancestors, with little blest,  
 Patient of labour when the end was rest,  
 Indulg'd the day that hous'd their annual grain,  
 With feasts, and off'rings, and a thankful strain:  
 The joy their wives, their sons, and servants share,  
 Ease of their toil, and part'ners of their care:  
 The laugh, the jest, attendants on the bowl,  
 Smooth'd ev'ry brow, and open'd ev'ry soul:  
 With growing years the pleasing Licence grew,  
 And Taunts alternate innocently flew.  
 But Times corrupt, and Nature, ill-inclin'd,  
 Produc'd the point that left a sting behind;  
 Till friend with friend, and families at strife,  
 Triumphant Malice rag'd thro' private life.  
 Who felt the wrong, or fear'd it, took th' alarm,  
 Appeal'd to Law, and Justice lent her arm.  
 At length, by wholesome dread of statutes bound,  
 The Poets learn'd to please, and not to wound:  
 Most warp'd to Flatt'ry's side; but some, more nice,  
 Preserv'd the freedom, and forbore the vice.  
 Hence Satire rose, that just the medium hit,  
 And heals with Morals what it hurts with Wit.

We conquer'd France, but felt our Captive's  
 charms;

Her Arts victorious triumph'd o'er our Arms;  
 Britain to soft refinements less a foe,  
 Wit grew polite, and Numbers learn'd to flow.  
 Waller was smooth; but Dryden taught to join )  
 The varying verse, the full-resounding line, )  
 The long majestic March, and Energy divine. )  
 Tho' still some traces of our rustic vein  
 And splay-foot verse, remain'd, and will remain.  
 Late, very late, correctness grew our care,  
 When the tir'd Nation breath'd from civil war.  
 Exact Racine, and Corneille's noble fire,  
 Show'd us that France had something to admire.  
 Not but the Tragic spirit was our own,  
 And full in Shakespear, fair in Otway shone:  
 But Otway fail'd to polish or refine,  
 And fluent Shakespear scarce effac'd a line.  
 Ev'n copious Dryden wanted, or forgot,  
 The last and greatest Art, the Art to blot.  
 Some doubt, if equal pains, or equal fire  
 The humbler Muse of Comedy require.  
 But in known Images of life, I guess  
 The labour greater, as th' indulgence less.  
 Observe how seldom ev'n the best succeed:  
 Tell me if Congreve's Fools are Fools indeed?  
 What pert, low Dialogue has Farquhar writ!  
 How Van wants grace, who never wanted wit!  
 The stage how loosely does Astræa tread,<sup>1</sup>  
 Who fairly puts all Characters to bed!  
 And idle Cibber, how he breaks the laws,  
 To make poor Pinky eat with vast applause!<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Mrs. Aphra Behn.

<sup>2</sup>William Pinkethman, a popular master of low comedy: the *Tatler* describes him devouring a cold chicken 'with great applause' in the character of Harlequin.

But fill their purse, our Poet's work is done,  
Alike to them, by Pathos or by Pun.

O you! whom Vanity's light bark conveys  
On Fame's mad voyage by the wind of praise,  
With what a shifting gale your course you ply,  
For ever sunk too low, or borne too high!  
Who pants for glory finds but short repose,  
A breath revives him, or a breath o'erthrows.  
Farewell the stage! if just as thrives the play,  
The silly bard grows fat, or falls away.

There still remains, to mortify a Wit,  
The many-headed Monster of the Pit:  
A senseless, worthless, and unhonour'd crowd;  
Who, to disturb their betters mighty proud,  
Clatt'ring their sticks before ten lines are spoke,  
Call for the Farce, the Bear, or the Black-joke.<sup>1</sup>  
What dear delight to Britons Farce affords!  
Ever the taste of Mobs, but now of Lords;  
(Taste, that eternal wanderer, which flies  
From heads to ears, and now from ears to eyes.)  
The Play stands still; damn action and discourse,  
Back fly the scenes, and enter foot and horse;  
Pageants on Pageants, in long order drawn,  
Peers, Heralds, Bishops, Ermine, Gold and Lawn;  
The Champion too! and, to complete the jest,  
Old Edward's Armour beams on Cibber's breast.  
With laughter sure Democritus had died,  
Had he beheld an Audience gape so wide.  
Let Bear or Elephant be e'er so white,  
The people, sure, the people are the sight!  
Ah luckless Poet! stretch thy lungs and roar,  
That Bear or Elephant shall heed thee more;  
While all its throats the Gallery extends,

<sup>1</sup>Black pudding.

And all the Thunder of the Pit ascends!  
 Loud as the Wolves, on Orcas' stormy steep,  
 Howl to the roarings of the Northern deep.  
 Such is the shout, the long-applauding note,  
 At Quin's high plume, or Oldfield's petticoat;  
 Or when from Court a birth-day suit bestow'd,  
 Sinks the lost Actor in the tawdry load.  
 Booth enters—hark! the Universal peal!  
 'But has he spoken?' Not a syllable.  
 What shook the stage, and made the People stare?  
 Cato's long Wig, flow'r'd gown, and lacquer'd chair.

Yet lest you think I rally more than teach,  
 Or praise malignly Arts I cannot reach,  
 Let me for once presume t' instruct the times,  
 To know the Poet from the Man of rhymes:  
 'Tis he, who gives my breast a thousand pains,  
 Can make me feel each Passion that he feigns;  
 Enrage, compose, with more than magic Art,  
 With Pity, and with Terror, tear my heart;  
 And snatch me, o'er the earth, or thro' the air,  
 To Thebes, to Athens, when he will, and where.

But not this part of the Poetic state  
 Alone, deserves the favour of the Great;  
 Think of those Authors, Sir, who would rely  
 More on a Reader's sense, than Gazer's eye.  
 Or who shall wander where the Muses sing?  
 Who climb their mountain, or who taste their spring?  
 How shall we fill a Library with Wit,  
 When Merlin's Cave is half unfurnish'd yet?<sup>1</sup>

My Liege! why Writers little claim your thought,  
 I guess; and, with their leave, will tell the fault:  
 We Poets are (upon a Poet's word)

<sup>1</sup>Merlin's Cave was a rustic folly at Richmond, built, and furnished as a miniature library, by Queen Caroline.



Of all mankind, the creatures most absurd:  
 The season, when to come, and when to go,  
 To sing, or cease to sing, we never know;  
 And if we will recite nine hours in ten,  
 You lose your patience, just like other men.  
 Then too we hurt ourselves, when to defend  
 A single verse, we quarrel with a friend;  
 Repeat unask'd; lament, the Wit's too fine  
 For vulgar eyes, and point out ev'ry line.  
 But most, when straining with too weak a wing,  
 We needs will write Epistles to the King;  
 And from the moment we oblige the town,  
 Expect a place, or pension from the Crown;  
 Or dubb'd Historians, by express command,  
 T' enroll your Triumphs o'er the seas and land,  
 Be call'd to Court to plan some work divine,  
 As once for LOUIS, Boileau and Racine.

Yet think, great Sir! (so many Virtues shown)  
 Ah think, what Poet best may make them known?  
 Or choose at least some Minister of Grace,  
 Fit to bestow the Laureate's weighty place.

Charles, to late times to be transmitted fair,  
 Assign'd his figure to Bernini's care;  
 And great Nassau to Kneller's hand decreed  
 To fix him graceful on the bounding Steed;  
 So well in paint and stone they judg'd of merit:  
 But Kings in Wit may want discerning Spirit.  
 The Hero William, and the Martyr Charles,  
 One knighted Blackmore, and one pension'd Quarles;  
 Which made old Ben, and surly Dennis swear,  
 'No Lord's anointed, but a Russian Bear'.

Not with such majesty, such bold relief,  
 The Forms august, of King, or conqu'ring Chief,  
 E'er swell'd on marble; as in verse have shin'd

(In polish'd verse) the Manners and the Mind.  
 Oh! could I mount on the Mæonian wing,  
 Your Arms, your Actions, your repose to sing!  
 What seas you travers'd, and what fields you fought!  
 Your Country's Peace, how oft, how dearly bought!  
 How barb'rous rage subsided at your word,  
 And Nations wonder'd while they dropp'd the sword!  
 How, when you nodded, o'er the land and deep,  
 Peace stole her wing, and wrapt the world in sleep;  
 'Till earth's extremes your mediation own,  
 And Asia's Tyrants tremble at your Throne—  
 But Verse, alas! your Majesty disdains;  
 And I'm not us'd to Panegyric strains:  
 The Zeal of Fools offends at any time,  
 But most of all, the Zeal of Fools in rhyme.  
 Besides, a fate attends on all I write,  
 That when I aim at praise, they say I bite.  
 A vile Encomium doubly ridicules:  
 There's nothing blackens like the ink of fools.  
 If true, a woeful likeness; and if lies,  
 'Praise undeserv'd is scandal in disguise.'  
 Well may he blush, who gives it, or receives;  
 And when I flatter, let my dirty leaves  
 (Like Journals, Odes, and such forgotten things  
 As Eusden, Philips, Settle,<sup>1</sup> writ of Kings)  
 Clothe spice, line trunks, or, flutt'ring in a row,  
 Befringe the rails of Bedlam and Soho.

<sup>1</sup>Laurence Eusden, Poet Laureate in the reign of Charles II:  
 Ambrose 'namby-pamby' Philips, to whom Pope makes many other  
 references; Elkanah Settle, a city-poet, satirized by Dryden.

THE SECOND EPISTLE  
OF THE  
SECOND BOOK OF HORACE

Ludentis speciem dabit, et torquebitur.

HOR. [V. 124.]

DEAR Col'nel,<sup>1</sup> COBHAM's and your country's  
Friend!

You love a Verse, take such as I can send.  
A Frenchman comes, presents you with his Boy,  
Bows and begins—'This Lad, Sir, is of Blois:  
'Observe his shape how clean! his locks how curl'd!  
'My only son, I'd have him see the world:  
'His French is pure; his Voice too—you shall hear.  
'Sir, he's your slave, for twenty pound a year.  
'Mere wax as yet, you fashion him with ease,  
'Your Barber, Cook, Upholst'rer, what you please:  
'A perfect genius at an Opera-song—  
'To say too much, might do my honour wrong.  
'Take him with all his virtues, on my word;  
'His whole ambition was to serve a Lord:  
'But, Sir, to you, with what would I not part?  
'Tho' faith, I fear, 'twill break his Mother's heart.  
'Once (and but once) I caught him in a lie,  
'And then, unwhipp'd, he had the grace to cry:  
'The fault he has I fairly shall reveal,  
'(Could you o'erlook but that) it is to steal.'

If, after this, you took the graceless lad,  
Could you complain, my Friend, he prov'd so bad?  
Faith, in such case, if you should prosecute,  
I think Sir Godfrey should decide the suit;  
Who sent the Thief that stole the Cash away,

<sup>1</sup>Colonel Cotterell.

And punish'd him that put it in his way.

Consider then, and judge me in this light;  
I told you when I went, I could not write;  
You said the same; and are you discontent  
With Laws, to which you gave your own assent?  
Nay worse, to ask for Verse at such a time!  
D'ye think me good for nothing but to rhyme?

In ANNA'S Wars, a Soldier poor and old  
Had dearly earn'd a little purse of gold;  
Tir'd with a tedious march, one luckless night,  
He slept, poor dog! and lost it, to a doit.  
This put the man in such a desp'rate mind,  
Between revenge, and grief, and hunger join'd  
Against the foe, himself, and all mankind,  
He leap'd the trenches, scal'd a Castle-wall,  
Tore down a Standard, took the Fort and all.  
'Prodigious well'; his great Commander cry'd,  
Gave him much praise, and some reward beside.  
Next pleas'd his Excellence a town to batter:  
(Its name I know not, and 'tis no great matter)  
'Go on, my Friend (he cry'd) see yonder walls!  
'Advance and conquer! go where glory calls!  
'More honours, more rewards, attend the brave.'  
Don't you remember what reply he gave?  
'D'ye think me, noble Gen'ral, such a Sot?  
'Let him take Castles who has ne'er a groat.'

Bred up at home, full early I begun  
To read in Greek the wrath of Peleus' son.  
Besides, my Father taught me from a lad,  
The better art to know the good from bad:  
(And little sure imported to remove,  
To hunt for Truth in Maudlin's learned grove.)  
But knottier points we knew not half so well,  
Depriv'd us soon of our paternal Cell;

And certain Laws, by suff'rers thought unjust,  
 Deny'd all posts of profit or of trust:  
 Hopes after hopes of pious Papists fail'd,  
 While mighty WILLIAM's thund'ring arm prevail'd.  
 For Right Hereditary tax'd and fin'd,  
 He stuck to poverty with peace of mind;  
 And me, the Muses help'd to undergo it;  
 Convict a Papist he, and I a Poet.  
 But (thanks to Homer) since I live and thrive,  
 Indebted to no Prince or Peer alive,  
 Sure I should want the care of ten Monroes,  
 If I would scribble, rather than repose.  
 Years follow'ng years, steal something ev'ry day,  
 At last they steal us from ourselves away;  
 In one our Frolics, one Amusements end,  
 In one a Mistress drops, in one a Friend:  
 This subtle Thief of life, this paltry Time,  
 What will it leave me, if it snatch my rhyme?  
 If ev'ry wheel of that unweary'd Mill,  
 That turn'd ten thousand verses, now stands still?

But after all, what would you have me do?  
 When out of twenty I can please not two;  
 When this Heroics only deigns to praise,  
 Sharp Satire that, and that Pindaric lays?  
 One likes the Pheasant's wing, and one the leg;  
 The vulgar boil, the learned roast an egg;  
 Hard task! to hit the palate of such guests,  
 When Oldfield loves, what Dartineuf detests.

But grant I may relapse, for want of grace,  
 Again to rhyme, can London be the place?  
 Who there his Muse, or self, or soul attends,  
 In crowds, and courts, law, business, feasts, and  
 friends?

My counsel sends to execute a deed;

A Poet begs me, I will hear him read;  
 'In Palace-yard at nine you'll find me there—'  
 'At ten for certain, Sir, in Bloomsb'ry square—'  
 'Before the Lords at twelve my Cause comes on—'  
 'There's a Rehearsal, Sir, exact at one.—'  
 'Oh but a Wit can study in the streets,  
 'And raise his mind above the mob he meets.'  
 Not quite so well however as one ought;  
 A hackney coach may chance to spoil a thought;  
 And then a nodding beam, or pig of lead,  
 God knows, may hurt the very ablest head.

Have you not seen, at Guild-hall's narrow pass,  
 Two Aldermen dispute it with an Ass?  
 And Peers give way, exalted as they are,  
 Ev'n to their own S-r-v—nce in a Car?

Go, lofty Poet! and in such a crowd,  
 Sing thy sonorous verse—but not aloud.  
 Alas! to Grottos and to Groves we run,  
 To ease and silence, ev'ry Muse's son:  
 Blackmore himself, for any grand effort,  
 Would drink and dose at Tooting or Earl's-Court.  
 How shall I rhyme in this eternal roar?  
 How match the bards whom none e'er match'd  
 before?

The Man, who, stretch'd in Isis' calm retreat,  
 To books and study gives sev'n years complete,  
 See! strew'd with learned dust, his night-cap on,  
 He walks, an object new beneath the sun!  
 The boys flock round him, and the people stare: }  
 So stiff, so mute! some statue you would swear, }  
 Stept from its pedestal to take the air!  
 And here, while town, and court, and city roars,  
 With mobs, and duns, and soldiers, at their doors;  
 Shall I, in London, act this idle part?

Composing songs, for Fools to get by heart?<sup>1</sup>  
 The Temple late two brother Sergeants saw,  
 Who deem'd each other Oracles of Law;  
 With equal talents, these congenial souls  
 One lull'd th' Exchequer, and one stunn'd the Rolls;  
 Each had a gravity would make you split,  
 And shook his head at Murray, as a Wit.  
 'Twas, Sir, your law'—and 'Sir, your eloquence—'  
 'Yours, Cowper's manner'—and 'yours, Talbot's'<sup>1</sup>  
 sense.'

Thus we dispose of all poetic merit,  
 Yours Milton's genius, and mine Homer's spirit.  
 Call Tibbald Shakespear, and he'll swear the Nine,  
 Dear Cibber! never match'd one Ode of thine.  
 Lord! how we strut thro' Merlin's Cave, to see  
 No Poets there, but Stephen,<sup>2</sup> you, and me.  
 Walk with respect behind, while we at ease  
 Weave laurel Crowns, and take what names we  
 please.

'My dear Tibullus!' if that will not do,  
 'Let me be Horace, and be Ovid you:  
 'Or, I'm content, allow me Dryden's strains,  
 'And you shall rise up Otway for your pains.'  
 Much do I suffer, much, to keep in peace  
 This jealous, waspish, wrong-head, rhyming race;  
 And much must flatter, if the whim should bite  
 To court applause by printing what I write:  
 But let the Fit pass o'er, I'm wise enough,  
 To stop my ears to their confounded stuff.

In vain bad Rhymers all mankind reject,

<sup>1</sup>Lords Cowper and Talbot both occupied distinguished legal positions, Talbot as Lord Chancellor.

<sup>2</sup>Stephen Duck, a harmless but untalented versifier, patronized by Queen Caroline.

They treat themselves with most profound respect;  
 'Tis to small purpose that you hold your tongue:  
 Each prais'd within, is happy all day long;  
 But how severely with themselves proceed  
 The men, who write such Verse as we can read?  
 Their own strict Judges, not a word they spare  
 That wants or force, or light, or weight, or care,  
 Howe'er unwillingly it quits its place,  
 Nay tho' at Court (perhaps) it may find grace:  
 Such they'll degrade; and sometimes, in its stead,  
 In downright charity revive the dead;  
 Mark where a bold expressive phrase appears,  
 Bright thro' the rubbish of some hundred years;  
 Command old words that long have slept, to wake,  
 Words, that wise Bacon, or brave Raleigh spake;  
 Or bid the new be English, ages hence,  
 (For Use will farther what's begot by Sense)  
 Pour the full tide of eloquence along,  
 Serenely pure, and yet divinely strong,  
 Rich with the treasures of each foreign tongue; }  
 Prune the luxuriant, the uncouth refine,  
 But show no mercy to an empty line:  
 Then polish all, with so much life and ease,  
 You think 'tis Nature, and a knack to please:  
 'But ease in writing flows from Art, not chance;  
 'As those move easiest who have learn'd to dance.'

If such the plague and pains to write by rule,  
 Better (say I) be pleas'd, and play the fool;  
 Call, if you will, bad rhyming a disease,  
 It gives men happiness, or leaves them ease.  
 There liv'd *in primo Georgii* (they record)  
 A worthy member, no small fool, a Lord;  
 Who, tho' the House was up, delighted sate,  
 Heard, noted, answer'd, as in full debate:



In all but this, a man of sober life,  
 Fond of his Friend, and civil to his Wife;  
 Not quite a madman, tho' a pasty fell,  
 And much too wise to walk into a well.  
 Him, the damn'd Doctors and his Friends immur'd,  
 They bled, they cupp'd, they purg'd; in short, they  
 cur'd.

Whereat the gentleman began to stare—  
 'My Friends?' he cry'd, 'p—x take you for your care!  
 That from a Patriot of distinguish'd note,  
 Have bled and purg'd me to a simple Vote.'  
 Well, on the whole, plain Prose must be my fate:  
 Wisdom (curse on it) will come soon or late.  
 There is a time when Poets will grow dull:  
 I'll e'en leave verses to the boys at school:  
 To rules of Poetry no more confin'd,  
 I learn to smooth and harmonize my Mind,  
 Teach ev'ry thought within its bounds to roll,  
 And keep the equal measure of the Soul.

Soon as I enter at my country door,  
 My mind resumes the thread it dropt before;  
 Thoughts, which at Hyde-park-corner I forgot,  
 Meet and rejoin me, in the pensive Grot.  
 There all alone, and compliments apart,  
 I ask these sober questions of my heart.

If, when the more you drink, the more you crave,  
 You tell the Doctor; when the more you have,  
 The more you want; why not with equal ease  
 Confess as well your Folly, as Disease?  
 The heart resolves this matter in a thrice,  
 'Men only feel the Smart, but not the Vice'.

When golden Angels<sup>1</sup> cease to cure the Evil,

<sup>1</sup>This coin was paid by those who came to be touched for the King's Evil.

You give all royal Witchcraft to the Devil;  
 When servile Chaplains cry, that birth and place  
 Endue a Peer with honour, truth, and grace,  
 Look in that breast, most dirty D—! be fair,  
 Say, can you find out one such lodger there?  
 Yet still, not heeding what your heart can teach,  
 You go to church to hear these Flatt'ers preach.

Indeed, could wealth bestow or wit or merit,  
 A grain of courage, or a spark of spirit,  
 The wisest man might blush, I must agree,  
 If D\*\*\* lov'd sixpence more than he.

If there be truth in Law, and Use can give  
 A Property, that's yours on which you live.  
 Delightful Abs-court, if its fields afford  
 Their fruits to you, confesses you its lord:  
 All Worldly's hens, nay partridge, sold to town:  
 His Ven'son too, a guinea makes your own.  
 He bought at thousands, what with better wit  
 You purchase as you want, and bit by bit;  
 Now, or long since, what diff'rence will be found?  
 You pay a penny, and he paid a pound.

Heathcote himself, and such large-acred men,  
 Lords of fat E'sham, or of Lincoln fen,  
 Buy every stick of wood that lends them heat,  
 Buy every Pullet they afford to eat.  
 Yet these are Wights, who fondly call their own  
 Half that the Dev'l o'erlooks from Lincoln town.  
 The Laws of God, as well as of the land,  
 Abhor, a Perpetuity should stand:  
 Estates have wings, and hang in Fortune's pow'r  
 Loose on the point of ev'ry wav'ring hour,  
 Ready, by force, or of your own accord,  
 By sale, at least by death, to change their lord.  
*Man?* and *for ever?* wretch! what wouldst thou have?

Heir urges heir, like wave impelling wave.  
 All vast possessions (just the same the case  
 Whether you call them Villa, Park, or Chase)  
 Alas, my BATHURST! what will they avail?  
 Join Cotswood hills to Saperton's fair dale,  
 Let rising Granaries and Temples here,  
 There mingled farms and pyramids appear,  
 Link towns to towns with avenues of oak,  
 Enclose whole downs in walls, 'tis all a joke!  
 Inexorable Death shall level all,  
 And trees, and stones, and farms, and farmer fall.

Gold, Silver, Iv'ry, Vases sculptur'd high,  
 Paint, Marble, Gems, and robes of Persian dye,  
 There are who have not—and thank heav'n there are,  
 Who, if they have not, think not worth their care.

Talk what you will of Taste, my friend, you'll find,  
 Two of a face, as soon as of a mind.

Why, of two brothers, rich and restless one  
 Ploughs, burns, manures, and toils from sun to sun;  
 The other slights, for women, sports, and wines,  
 All Townshend's Turnips, and all Grosvenor's mines:  
 Why one like Bu—<sup>1</sup> with pay and scorn content,  
 Bows and votes on, in Court and Parliament;  
 One, driv'n by strong Benevolence of soul,  
 Shall fly, like Oglethorpe,<sup>2</sup> from pole to pole:  
 Is known alone to that Directing Pow'r,  
 Who forms the Genius in the natal hour;  
 That God of Nature, who, within us still,  
 Inclines our action, not constrains our will;  
 Various of temper, as of face or frame,  
 Each individual: His great End the same.

<sup>1</sup>Bubb Doddington.

<sup>2</sup>James Edward Oglethorpe, subsequently the friend of Samuel Johnson, had fought against the Turks under Prince Eugène and settled the colony of Georgia.

Yes, Sir, how small soever be my heap,  
 A part I will enjoy, as well as keep.  
 My heir may sigh, and think it want of grace  
 A man so poor would live without a place;  
 But sure no statute in his favour says,  
 How free, or frugal, I shall pass my days:  
 I, who at some times spend, at others spare,  
 Divided between carelessness and care.  
 'Tis one thing madly to disperse my store;  
 Another, not to heed to treasure more;  
 Glad, like a Boy, to snatch the first good day,  
 And pleas'd, if sordid want be far away.

What is't to me (a passenger God wot)  
 Whether my vessel be first-rate or not?  
 The Ship itself may make a better figure,  
 But I that sail, am neither less nor bigger.  
 I neither strut with ev'ry fav'ring breath,  
 Nor strive with all the tempest in my teeth.  
 In pow'r, wit, figure, virtue, fortune, plac'd  
 Behind the foremost, and before the last.

'But why all this of Av'rice? I have none.'  
 I wish you joy, Sir, of a Tyrant gone;  
 But does no other lord it at this hour,  
 As wild and mad: the Avarice of pow'r?  
 Does neither Rage inflame, nor Fear appal?  
 Not the black fear of death, that saddens all?  
 With terrors round, can Reason hold her throne,  
 Despise the known, nor tremble at th' unknown?  
 Survey both worlds, intrepid and entire,  
 In spite of witches, devils, dreams, and fire?  
 Pleas'd to look forward, pleas'd to look behind,  
 And count each birth-day with a grateful mind?  
 Has life no sourness, drawn so near its end?  
 Can'st thou endure a foe, forgive a friend?

Has age but melted the rough parts away,  
As winter-fruits grow mild ere they decay?  
Or will you think, my friend, your business done,  
When, of a hundred thorns, you pull out one?

Learn to live well, or fairly make your will;  
You've play'd, and lov'd, and eat, and drank your  
fill:

Walk sober off; before a sprightlier age  
Comes titt'ring on, and shoves you from the stage:  
Leave such to trifle with more grace and ease,  
Whom Folly pleases, and whose Follies please.

SELECTIONS FROM  
THE DUNCIAD

IN FOUR BOOKS

TO DR. JONATHAN SWIFT

*Pope's numerous and ferocious literary quarrels show the least endearing side of an extremely complex character. Often he descended to violent scurrility. Nor was he averse to such schoolboy tactics as secretly administering an emetic to a scribbler who had offended him. Yet it is to his irascible hypersensitiveness that we owe in the first place the production of The Dunciad. As usual, however, he transcended his theme, and his satire developed into an epic presentation of human folly and credulity. Here we have attempted to give a general view of the poem by means of seven lengthy extracts.*

BOOK I

*Dulness Invoked*

THE Mighty Mother, and her Son, who brings  
The Smithfield Muses<sup>1</sup> to the ear of Kings,  
I sing. Say you, her instruments the Great!  
Call'd to this work by Dulness, Jove, and Fate:  
You by whose care, in vain decry'd and curst,  
Still Duncce the second reigns like Duncce the first;  
Say, how the Goddess bade Britannia sleep,  
And pour'd her Spirit o'er the land and deep.

In eldest time, ere mortals writ or read,  
Ere Pallas issu'd from the Thund'rer's head,  
Dulness o'er all possess'd her ancient right,  
Daughter of Chaos and eternal Night:

<sup>1</sup>Smithfield was the site of Bartholomew Fair.

Fate in their dotage this fair Idiot gave,  
 Gross as her sire, and as her mother grave,  
 Laborious, heavy, busy, bold, and blind,  
 She rul'd, in native Anarchy, the mind.

Still her old Empire to restore she tries,  
 For, born a Goddess, Dulness never dies.

O Thou! whatever title please thine ear,  
 Dean, Drapier, Bickerstaff, or Gulliver!  
 Whether thou choose Cervantes' serious air,  
 Or laugh and shake in Rab'lais' easy chair,  
 Or praise the Court, or magnify Mankind,  
 Or thy griev'd Country's copper chains unbind;<sup>1</sup>  
 From thy Bœotia tho' her Pow'r retires,  
 Mourn not, my SWIFT, at aught our Realm acquires.  
 Here pleas'd behold her mighty wings outspread  
 To hatch a new Saturnian age of Lead.

Close to those walls where Folly holds her throne,  
 And laughs to think Monroe<sup>2</sup> would take her down,  
 Where o'er the gates, by his fam'd father's hand,  
 Great Cibber's brazen, brainless brothers stand;  
 One Cell there is, conceal'd from vulgar eye,  
 The Cave of Poverty and Poetry.  
 Keen, hollow winds howl thro' the bleak recess,  
 Emblem of Music caus'd by Emptiness.  
 Hence Bards, like Proteus long in vain tied down,  
 Escape in Monsters, and amaze the town.  
 Hence Miscellanies spring, the weekly boast  
 Of Curl's chaste press, and Lintot's rubric post:<sup>3</sup>  
 Hence hymning Tyburn's elegiac lines,

<sup>1</sup>*The Drapier's Letters* were, of course, directed against the imposition of Wood's copper coins on Ireland.

<sup>2</sup>Physician to Bedlam.

<sup>3</sup>Lintot and Curl were both booksellers and publishers; Curl had been fined for publishing obscene literature; Lintot affected a red-lettered title-page.

Hence Journals, Medleys, Merc'ries, MAGAZINES;  
 Sepulchral Lies, our holy walls to grace,  
 And New-year Odes, and all the Grub-street race.

In clouded Majesty here Dulness shone;  
 Four guardian Virtues, round, support her throne:  
 Fierce champion Fortitude, that knows no fears  
 Of hisses, blows, or want, or loss of ears:  
 Calm Temperance, whose blessings those partake  
 Who hunger, and who thirst for scribbling sake:  
 Prudence, whose glass presents th' approaching jail:  
 Poetic Justice, with her lifted scale,  
 Where, in nice balance, truth with gold she weighs,  
 And solid pudding against empty praise.

Here she beholds the Chaos dark and deep,  
 Where nameless Somethings in their causes sleep,  
 'Till genial Jacob,<sup>1</sup> or a warm Third day,  
 Call forth each mass, a Poem, or a Play:  
 How hints, like spawn, scarce quick in embryo lie,  
 How new-born nonsense first is taught to cry,  
 Maggots half-form'd in rhyme exactly meet,  
 And learn to crawl upon poetic feet.  
 Here one poor word an hundred clenches makes,  
 And ductile Dulness new mæanders takes;  
 There motley images her fancy strike,  
 Figures ill pair'd, and Similes unlike.  
 She sees a Mob of Metaphors advance,  
 Pleas'd with the madness of the mazy dance;  
 How Tragedy and Comedy embrace;  
 How Farce and Epic get a jumbled race;  
 How Time himself stands still at her command,  
 Realms shift their place, and Ocean turns to land.  
 Here gay Description Egypt glads with show'rs,  
 Or gives to Zemblia fruits, to Barca flow'rs;

<sup>1</sup>Jacob Tonson, publisher of Dryden and Pope.



Glitt'ring with ice here hoary hills are seen,  
 There painted valleys of eternal green;  
 In cold December fragrant chaplets blow,  
 And heavy harvests nod beneath the snow.

All these and more the cloud-compelling Queen  
 Beholds thro' fogs, that magnify the scene.  
 She, tinsell'd o'er in robes of varying hues,  
 With self-applause her wild creation views;  
 Sees momentary monsters rise and fall,  
 And with her own fools-colours gilds them all.

'Twas on the day when \* \* rich and grave,<sup>1</sup>  
 Like Cimon, triumph'd both on land and wave:  
 (Pomps without guilt, of bloodless swords and  
 maces,

Glad chains, warm furs, broad banners, and broad  
 faces)

Now Night descending, the proud scene was o'er,  
 But liv'd in Settle's numbers one day more.<sup>2</sup>  
 Now May'rs and Shrieves all hush'd and satiate lay,  
 Yet ate, in dreams, the custard of the day;  
 While pensive Poets painful vigils keep,  
 Sleepless themselves, to give their readers sleep.  
 Much to the mindful Queen the feast recalls  
 What City Swans once sung within the walls;  
 Much she revolves their arts, their ancient praise,  
 And sure succession down from Heywood's<sup>3</sup> days.  
 She saw, with joy, the line immortal run,  
 Each sire imprest, and glaring in his son:  
 So watchful Bruin forms, with plastic care,  
 Each growing lump, and brings it to a Bear.

<sup>1</sup>Early editions of the poem print 'Thorold, rich and grave'. Sir George Thorold was Lord Mayor in 1720.

<sup>2</sup>Elkanah Settle, the City-poet, author of yearly panegyrics on civic occasions.

<sup>3</sup>A versifier of the reign of Henry VIII.

She saw old Prynne in restless Daniel<sup>1</sup> shine,  
 And Eusden eke out Blackmore's endless line;  
 She saw slow Philips creep like Tate's poor page,<sup>2</sup>  
 And all the mighty Mad in Dennis rage.

In each she marks her Image full exprest,  
 But chief in BAYS's<sup>3</sup> monster-breeding breast:  
 Bays, form'd by nature Stage and Town to bless,  
 And act, and be, a Coxcomb with success.  
 Dulness, with transport eyes the lively Dunce,  
 Rememb'ring she herself was Pertness once.  
 Now (shame to Fortune!) an ill Run at Play  
 Blank'd his bold visage, and a thin Third day:  
 Swearing and supperless the Hero sate,  
 Blasphem'd his Gods, the Dice, and damn'd his Fate;  
 Then gnaw'd his pen, then dash'd it on the ground,  
 Sinking from thought to thought, a vast profound!  
 Plung'd for his sense, but found no bottom there;  
 Yet wrote and flounder'd on in mere despair.  
 Round him much Embryo, much Abortion lay,  
 Much future Ode, and abdicated Play;  
 Nonsense precipitate, like running Lead,  
 That slipp'd thro' Cracks and Zig-zags of the Head;  
 All that on Folly Frenzy could beget,  
 Fruits of dull Heat, and Sooterkins of Wit,  
 Next, o'er his Books his eyes began to roll,  
 In pleasing memory of all he stole,  
 How here he sipp'd, how there he plunder'd snug,  
 And suck'd all o'er, like an industrious Bug.  
 Here lay poor Fletcher's half-eat scenes, and here  
 The Frippery of crucify'd Moliere;

<sup>1</sup>William Prynne and Daniel Defoe both suffered in the pillory.

<sup>2</sup>Laurence Eusden and Nahum Tate, undistinguished Poets Laureate.

<sup>3</sup>Originally 'Tibbald's monster-breeding breast'. Pope had come into conflict with Theobald over the editing of Shakespeare.

There hapless Shakespear, yet of Tibbald sore,  
 Wish'd he had blotted for himself before.  
 The rest on Out-side merit but presume,  
 Or serve (like other Fools) to fill a room;  
 Such with their shelves as due proportion hold,  
 Or their fond parents drest in red and gold;  
 Or where the pictures for the page atone,  
 And Quarles is sav'd by Beauties not his own.  
 Here swells the shelf with Ogilby the great;<sup>1</sup>  
 There, stamp'd with arms, Newcastle shines  
 complete:<sup>2</sup>

Here all his suff'ring brotherhood retire,  
 And 'scape the martyrdom of jakes and fire:  
 A Gothic Library! of Greece and Rome  
 Well purg'd, and worthy Settle, Banks, and Broome.<sup>3</sup>

But, high above, more solid Learning shone,  
 The Classics of an Age that heard of none;  
 There Caxton slept, with Wynkyn at his side,  
 One clasp'd in wood, and one in strong cow-hide;  
 There sav'd by spice, like mummies, many a year,  
 Dry Bodies of Divinity appear;  
 De Lyra<sup>4</sup> there a dreadful front extends,  
 And here the groaning shelves Philemon<sup>5</sup> bends.

Of these twelve volumes, twelve of amplest size,  
 Redeem'd from tapers and defrauded pies,  
 Inspir'd he seizes; these an altar raise;  
 An hecatomb of pure unsully'd lays  
 That altar crowns; A folio Common-place

<sup>1</sup>John Ogilby, publisher, poet and translator.

<sup>2</sup>The Duchess of Newcastle was a fashionable dabbler in poetry.

<sup>3</sup>Banks did for tragedy what Elkanah Settle did for poetry, Broome, 'a serving-man of Ben Jonson', produced a comedy which Pope pronounced 'not entirely contemptible'.

<sup>4</sup>A voluminous commentator of the fifteenth century.

<sup>5</sup>Philemon Holland, an immensely prolific translator.

Finds the whole pile, of all his works the base;  
 Quartos, octavos, shape the less'ning pyre;  
 A twisted Birth-day Ode completes the spire.

Then he: 'Great Tamer of all human art!  
 First in my care, and ever at my heart;  
 Dulness! whose good old cause I yet defend,  
 With whom my Muse began, with whom shall end.  
 E'er since Sir Fopling's Periwig was Praise,  
 To the last honours of the Butt and Bays:  
 O thou! of Bus'ness the directing soul!  
 To this our head like bias to the bowl,  
 Which, as more pond'rous, made its aim more true,  
 Obliquely waddling to the mark in view:  
 O! ever gracious to perplex'd mankind,  
 Still spread a healing mist before the mind;  
 And, lest we err by Wit's wild dancing light,  
 Secure us kindly in our native night. . . .

With that, a Tear (portentous sign of Grace!)  
 Stole from the Master of the sev'nfold Face;  
 And thrice he lifted high the Birth-day brand,  
 And thrice he dropt it from his quiv'ring hand;  
 Then lights the structure, with averted eyes:  
 The rolling smoke involves the sacrifice.  
 The op'ning clouds disclose each work by turns:  
 Now flames the Cid, and now Perolla burns;  
 Great Cæsar roars, and hisses in the fires;  
 King John in silence modestly expires;  
 No merit now the dear Nonjuror claims,  
 Moliere's old stubble in a moment flames.  
 Tears gush'd again, as from pale Priam's eyes  
 When the last blaze sent Ilion to the skies.

Rous'd by the light, old Dulness heav'd the head,

Then snatch'd a sheet of Thule<sup>1</sup> from her bed;  
 Sudden she flies, and whelms it o'er the pyre;  
 Down sink the flames, and with a hiss expire.

Her ample presence fills up all the place;  
 A veil of fogs dilates her awful face:  
 Great in her charms! as when on Shrieves and  
 May's

She looks, and breathes herself into their airs.  
 She bids him wait her to her sacred Dome:  
 Well pleas'd he enter'd, and confess'd his home.  
 So Spirits ending their terrestrial race  
 Ascend, and recognize their Native Place.  
 This the Great Mother dearer held than all  
 The clubs of Quidnuncs, or her own Guildhall:  
 Here stood her Opium, here she nurs'd her Owls,  
 And here she plann'd th' Imperial seat of Fools. . . .

## BOOK II

### *Dunces at Play*

HIGH on a gorgeous seat, that far out-shone  
 Henley's gilt tub,<sup>2</sup> or Fleckno's Irish throne,<sup>3</sup>  
 Or that where on her Curls the Public pours,<sup>4</sup>  
 All-bounteous, fragrant Grains and Golden show'rs,  
 Great Cibber sate: The proud Parnassian sneer,  
 The conscious simper, and the jealous leer,  
 Mix on his look: All eyes direct their rays  
 On him, and crowds turn Coxcombs as they gaze:

<sup>1</sup>The title of an unfinished poem by Ambrose Philips.

<sup>2</sup>John Henley, a popular open-air evangelist.

<sup>3</sup>Richard Flecknoe, an Irish priest turned author, whose name Dryden borrowed for the celebrated satirical poem on which *The Dunciad* is to some extent modelled.

<sup>4</sup>Edmund Curll had stood in the pillory.

His Peers shine round him with reflected grace,  
 New edge their dulness, and new bronze their face.  
 So from the Sun's broad beam in shallow urns  
 Heav'n's twinkling Sparks draw light, and point their  
 horns.

Not with more glee, by hands pontific crown'd,  
 With scarlet hats wide-waving circled round,  
 Rome in her Capitol saw Querno sit,<sup>1</sup>  
 Thron'd on seven hills, the Antichrist of wit.

And now the Queen, to glad her sons, proclaims,  
 By herald Hawkens, high heroic Games.  
 They summon all her Race: an endless band  
 Pours forth, and leaves unpeopled half the land.  
 A motley mixture! in long wigs, in bags,  
 In silks, in crapes, in Garters, and in Rags,  
 From drawing-rooms, from colleges, from garrets,  
 On horse, on foot, in hacks, and gilded chariots:  
 All who true Dunces in her cause appear'd,  
 And all who knew those Dunces to reward.

Amid that area wide they took their stand,  
 Where the tall may-pole once o'er-look'd the Strand.  
 But now (so ANNE and Piety ordain)  
 A Church collects the saints of Drury-lane.

With Authors, Stationers obey'd the call,  
 (The field of glory is a field for all).  
 Glory, and gain, th' industrious tribe provoke;  
 And gentle Dulness ever loves a joke.  
 A Poet's form she plac'd before their eyes,  
 And bade the nimblest racer seize the prize;  
 No meagre, muse-rid mope, adust and thin,  
 In a dun night-gown of his own loose skin;  
 But such a bulk as no twelve bards could raise,

<sup>1</sup>Camillo Querno, an Apulian poet, secured the patronage of Pope Leo X by singing to him a poem of twenty thousand verses.

Twelve starv'ling bards of these degen'rate days.  
 All as a partridge plump, full-fed, and fair,  
 She form'd this image of well-body'd air;  
 With pert flat eyes she window'd well its head:  
 A brain of feathers, and a heart of lead;  
 And empty words she gave, and sounding strain,  
 But senseless, lifeless! idol void and vain!  
 Never was dash'd out, at one lucky hit,  
 A fool, so just a copy of a wit;  
 So like, that critics said, the courtiers swore,  
 A Wit it was, and call'd the phantom Moore.<sup>1</sup>

All gaze with ardour: some a poet's name,  
 Others a sword-knot and lac'd suit inflame.  
 But lofty Lintot in the circle rose.  
 'This prize is mine; who tempt it are my foes;  
 'With me began this genius, and shall end.'  
 He spoke: and who with Lintot shall contend?  
 Fear held them mute. Alone, untaught to fear,  
 Stood dauntless Curl; 'Behold that rival here!  
 'The race by vigour, not by vaunts is won;  
 'So take the hindmost, Hell,' (he said) 'and run.'  
 Swift as a bard the bailiff leaves behind,  
 He left huge Lintot, and out-stripp'd the wind.  
 As when a dab-chick waddles thro' the copse  
 On feet and wings, and flies, and wades, and hops:  
 So lab'ring on, with shoulders, hands, and head,  
 Wide as a wind-mill all his figure spread,  
 With arms expanded Bernard rows his state,  
 And left-legg'd Jacob seems to emulate.  
 Full in the middle way there stood a lake,  
 Which Curl's Corinna chanc'd that morn to make:  
 (Such was her wont, at early dawn to drop

<sup>1</sup>James, son of Arthur Moore, the politician. Pope accused Moore of having plagiarized his birthday address to Martha Blount.

Her evening cates before his neighbour's shop,) Here fortun'd Curl to slide; loud shout the band, And 'Bernard! Bernard!' rings thro' all the Strand. Obscene with filth the miscreant lies bewray'd, Fall'n in the splash his wickedness had laid: Then first (if Poets aught of truth declare) The caitiff Vaticide conceiv'd a pray'r.

'Hear, Jove! whose name my bards and I adore, As much at least as any God's, or more; And him and his if more devotion warms, Down with the Bible, up with the Pope's Arms.'

A place there is, betwixt earth, air, and seas, Where, from Ambrosia, Jove retires for ease. There in his seat two spacious vents appear, On this he sits, to that he leans his ear, And hears the various vows of fond mankind; Some beg an eastern, some a western wind: All vain petitions, mounting to the sky, With reams abundant this abode supply; Amus'd he reads, and then returns the bills Sign'd with that Ichor which from Gods distils.

In office here fair Cloacina<sup>1</sup> stands, And ministers to Jove with purest hands. Forth from the heap she pick'd her Vot'ry's pray'r, And pac'd it next him, a distinction rare! Oft had the Goddess heard her servants call, From her black grottos near the Temple-wall, List'ning delighted to the jest unclean Of link-boys vile, and watermen obscene; Where as he fish'd her nether realms for Wit, She oft had favour'd him, and favours yet. Renew'd by ordure's sympathetic force, As oil'd with magic juices for the course,

<sup>1</sup>The Roman goddess of the sewers.



Vig'rous he rises; from th' effluvia strong  
 Imbibes new life, and scours and stinks along;  
 Re-passes Lintot, vindicates the race,  
 Nor heeds the brown dishonours of his face.

And now the victor stretch'd his eager hand,  
 Where the tall Nothing stood, or seem'd to stand;  
 A shapeless shade, it melted from his sight,  
 Like forms in clouds, or visions of the night.  
 To seize his papers, Curl, was next thy care;  
 His papers light fly diverse, tost in air;  
 Songs, sonnets, epigrams the winds uplift,  
 And whisk 'em back to Evans, Young, and Swift.  
 Th' embroider'd suit at least he deem'd his prey;  
 That suit an unpaid tailor snatch'd away.  
 No rag, no scrap, of all the beau, or wit,  
 That once so flutter'd, and that once so writ.

Heav'n rings with laughter. Of the laughter vain,  
 Dulness, good Queen, repeats the jest again.  
 Three wicked imps of her own Grubstreet choir,  
 She deck'd like Congreve, Addison, and Prior;  
 Mears, Warner, Wilkins' run: delusive thought!  
 Breval, Bond, Besaleel,<sup>2</sup> the varlets caught.  
 Curl stretches after Gay, but Gay is gone:  
 He grasps an empty Joseph<sup>3</sup> for a John;  
 So Proteus, hunted in a nobler shape,  
 Became, when seiz'd, a puppy, or an ape. . . .

'Now turn to diff'rent sports,' (the Goddess cries)  
 'And learn, my sons, the wond'rous pow'r of Noise.  
 To move, to raise, to ravish ev'ry heart,

<sup>1</sup>Booksellers and printers of many anonymous publications.

<sup>2</sup>Bond, Breval and Besaleel Morris had all published squibs at Pope's expense

<sup>3</sup>Joseph Gay was the name affixed by Curl to various pamphlets which he passed off as the work of John Gay.

With Shakespear's nature, or with Jonson's art,  
 Let others aim: 'tis yours to shake the soul  
 With Thunder rumbling from the mustard-bowl,  
 With horns and trumpets now to madness swell,  
 Now sink in sorrows with a tolling bell;  
 Such happy arts attention can command,  
 When fancy flags, and sense is at a stand.  
 Improve we these. Three Cat-calls be the bribe  
 Of him, whose chatt'ring shames the monkey-tribe;  
 And his this Drum, whose hoarse heroic bass  
 Drowns the loud clarion of the braying Ass.'

Now thousand tongues are heard in one loud din;  
 The monkey-mimics rush discordant in;  
 'Twas chatt'ring, grinning, mouthing, jabb'ring all,  
 And Noise and Norton, Brangling and Breval,<sup>1</sup>  
 Dennis and Dissonance, and captious Art,  
 And Snip-snap short, and Interruption smart,  
 And Demonstration thin, and Theses thick,  
 And Major, Minor, and Conclusion quick.  
 'Hold!' (cry'd the Queen), 'a Cat-call each shall win  
 Equal your merits! equal is your din!  
 But that this well-disputed game may end,  
 Sound forth, my Brayers, and the welkin rend.'

As, when the long-ear'd milky mothers wait  
 At some sick miser's triple bolted gate,  
 For their defrauded, absent foals they make  
 A moan so loud, that all the guild awake;  
 Sore sighs Sir Gilbert,<sup>2</sup> starting at the bray,  
 From dreams of millions, and three groats to pay.  
 So swells each wind-pipe; Ass intones to Ass;

<sup>1</sup>Norton Defoe, a journalist, son of Daniel; T. Durant Breval, author of a travel-book

<sup>2</sup>Contemporary financier. See *Moral Essays*, Epistle III, p. 139 and note.

Harmonic twang! of leather, horn, and brass;  
 Such as from lab'ring lungs th' Enthusiast blows,  
 High Sound, attemper'd to the vocal nose;  
 Or such as bellow from the deep Divine;  
 There, Webster! peal'd thy voice, and Whitfield!<sup>1</sup>  
     thine.

But far o'er all, sonorous Blackmore's strain;  
 Walls, steeples, skies, bray back to him again.  
 In Tot'nham fields, the brethren, with amaze,  
 Prick all their ears up, and forget to graze;  
 Long Chanc'ry-lane retentive rolls the sound,  
 And courts to courts return it round and round;  
 Thames wastes it thence to Rufus' roaring hall,  
 And Hungerford re-echoes bawl for bawl.  
 All hail him victor in both gifts of song,  
 Who sings so loudly, and who sings so long.

This labour past, by Bridewell all descend,  
 (As morning pray'r and flagellation end)<sup>2</sup>  
 To where Fleet-ditch with disemboguing streams  
 Rolls the large tribute of dead dogs to Thames,  
 The king of dykes! than whom no sluice of mud  
 With deeper sable blots the silver flood.  
 'Here strip, my children! here at once leap in,  
 'Here prove who best can dash thro' thick and thin,  
 'And who the most in love of dirt excel,  
 'Or dark dexterity of groping well.  
 'Who flings most filth, and wide pollutes around  
 'The Stream, be his the Weekly Journals bound;  
 'A pig of lead to him who dives the best;  
 'A peck of coals a-piece shall glad the rest.'

<sup>1</sup> Webster, a journalist; George Whitfield, the associate of the Wesleys.

<sup>2</sup> Recalcitrant inmates of Bridewell (a prison illustrated in Hogarth's *Harlot's Progress* series) were whipped 'between eleven and twelve in the morning, after church service. . . .'

In naked majesty Oldmixon stands,<sup>1</sup>  
And Milo-like surveys his arms and hands;  
Then, sighing, thus, 'And am I now three-score?  
'Ah why, ye Gods, should two and two make four?'  
He said, and climb'd a stranded lighter's height,  
Shot to the black abyss, and plung'd downright.  
The Senior's judgment all the crowd admire,  
Who but to sink the deeper, rose the higher.

Next Smedley div'd;<sup>2</sup> slow circles dimpled o'er  
The quaking mud, that clos'd, and op'd no more,  
All look, all sigh, and call on Smedley lost;  
'Smedley' in vain resounds thro' all the coast.

Then \* essay'd; scarce vanish'd out of sight,  
He buoys up instant, and returns to light:  
He bears no token of the sabler streams,  
And mounts far off among the Swans of Thames.

True to the bottom see Concanen creep,  
A cold, long-winded native of the deep;  
If perseverance gain the Diver's prize,  
Not everlasting Blackmore this denies;  
No noise, no stir, no motion canst thou make,  
Th' unconscious stream sleeps o'er thee like a lake.

Next plung'd a feeble, but a desp'rate pack,  
With each a sickly brother at his back:  
Sons of a Day! just buoyant on the flood,  
Then number'd with the puppies in the mud.  
Ask ye their names? I could as soon disclose  
The names of these blind puppies as of those.  
Fast by, like Niobe (her children gone)

<sup>1</sup>John Oldmixon is attacked by Pope as the 'unjust censurer of Mr. Addison'; see, however, his own portrait of Addison, *Prologue to the Satires*, p. 166.

<sup>2</sup>Jonathan Smedley, a scurrilous Irish journalist, who lampooned Swift and Pope.

Sits Mother Osborne,<sup>1</sup> stupefy'd to stone!  
 And Monumental brass this record bears,  
 'These are,—ah no! these were, the Gazetteers!'

Not so bold Arnall;<sup>2</sup> with a weight of skull,  
 Furious he dives, precipitately dull.

Whirlpools and storms his circling arm invest,  
 With all the might of gravitation blest.  
 No crab more active in the dirty dance,  
 Downward to climb, and backward to advance.  
 He brings up half the bottom on his head,  
 And loudly claims the Journals and the Lead.

The plunging Prelate,<sup>3</sup> and his pond'rous Grace,  
 With holy envy gave one Layman place.  
 When lo! a burst of thunder shook the flood;  
 Slow rose a form, in majesty of Mud;  
 Shaking the horrors of his sable brows,  
 And each ferocious feature grim with ooze.  
 Greater he looks, and more than mortal stares;  
 Then thus the wonders of the deep declares.

First he relates, how sinking to the chin,  
 Smit with his mien the Mud-nymphs suck'd him in:  
 How young Lutetia, softer than the down,  
 Nigrina black, and Merdamente brown,  
 Vied for his love in jetty bow'rs below,  
 As Hylas fair was ravished long ago.  
 Then sung, how shown him by the Nut-brown maids  
 A branch of Styx here rises from the Shades,  
 That tinctur'd as it runs with Lethe's streams,  
 And wafting Vapours from the Land of dreams,  
 (As under seas Alpheus' secret sluice

<sup>1</sup>'Osborne' was the nom-de-plume of a veteran hack-writer who eventually desisted from journalism.

<sup>2</sup>William Arnall, another hireling party-journalist.

<sup>3</sup>Possibly Bishop Sherlock.

Bears Pisa's off'rings to his Arethuse)  
 Pours into Thames: and hence the mingled wave  
 Intoxicates the pert, and lulls the grave:  
 Here brisker vapours o'er the TEMPEL creep,  
 There, all from Paul's to Aldgate drink and sleep.

Thence to the banks where rev'rend Bards repose,  
 They led him soft; each rev'rend Bard arose;  
 And Milbourn<sup>1</sup> chief, deputed by the rest,  
 Gave him the cassock, surcingle, and vest. . . .

## BOOK III

*The Temple of Dulness*

BUT in her Temple's last recess enclos'd,  
 On Dulness' lap th' Anointed head repos'd.  
 Him close she curtains round with Vapours blue,  
 And soft besprinkles with Cimmerian dew.  
 The raptures high the seat of Sense o'erflow,  
 Which only heads refin'd from Reason know.  
 Hence, from the straw where Bedlam's Prophet nods,  
 He hears loud Oracles, and talks with Gods:  
 Hence the Fool's Paradise, the Statesman's Scheme,  
 The air-built Castle, and the golden Dream,  
 The Maid's romantic wish, the Chemist's flame,  
 And Poet's vision of eternal Fame.

And now, on Fancy's easy wing convey'd,  
 The King descending views th' Elysian Shade.  
 A slipshod Sibyl led his steps along,  
 In lofty madness meditating song;  
 Her tresses staring from Poetic dreams,  
 And never wash'd, but in Castalia's streams.

<sup>1</sup>The Rev Luke Milbourn, a critic of Dryden's *Virgil*.

Taylor,<sup>1</sup> their better Charon, lends an oar,  
 (Once swan of Thames, tho' now he sings no more).  
 Benlowes,<sup>2</sup> propitious still to blockheads, bows;  
 And Shadwell nods the Poppy<sup>3</sup> on his brows.  
 Here, in a dusky vale where Lethe rolls,  
 Old Bavius sits,<sup>4</sup> to dip poetic souls,  
 And blunt the sense, and fit it for a skull  
 Of solid proof, impenetrably dull.  
 Instant, when dipt, away they wing their flight,  
 Where Brown and Mears<sup>5</sup> unbar the gates of Light,  
 Demand new bodies, and in Calf's array  
 Rush to the world, impatient for the day.  
 Millions and millions on these banks he views,  
 Thick as the stars of night, or morning dews,  
 As thick as bees o'er vernal blossoms fly,  
 As thick as eggs at Ward in pillory.<sup>6</sup>

Wond'ring he gaz'd: When lo! a Sage appears,  
 By his broad shoulders known, and length of ears,  
 Known by the band and suit which Settle<sup>7</sup> wore  
 (His only suit) for twice three years before:  
 All as the vest, appear'd the wearer's frame,  
 Old in new state; another, yet the same.  
 Bland and familiar as in life, begun  
 Thus the great Father to the greater Son.

'Oh born to see what none can see awake!  
 Behold the wonders of th' oblivious Lake.

<sup>1</sup>John Taylor, the water-poet, whose profuse but somewhat illiterate productions appeared during the first half of the seventeenth century.

<sup>2</sup>A rhyming country gentleman, the friend and patron of Quarles.

<sup>3</sup>Shadwell was said to have died of an overdose of opium, to which he was addicted.

<sup>4</sup>An ancient versifier, attacked by Virgil.

<sup>5</sup>Publishers and booksellers.

<sup>6</sup>John Ward, Member of Parliament, was convicted of forgery.

<sup>7</sup>Elkanah Settle, Dryden's antagonist.

Thou, yet unborn, hast touch'd this sacred shore;  
 The hand of Bavius drench'd thee o'er and o'er.  
 But blind to former, as to future fate,  
 What mortal knows his pre-existent state?  
 Who knows how long thy transmigrating soul  
 Might from Bœotian to Bœotian roll?  
 How many Dutchmen she vouchsaf'd to thrid?  
 How many stages thro' old Monks she rid?  
 And all who since, in mild benighted days,  
 Mix'd the Owl's ivy with the Poet's bays?  
 As man's Mæanders to the vital spring  
 Roll all their tides; then back their circles bring;  
 Or whirligigs twirl'd round by skilful swain,  
 Suck the thread in, then yield it out again:  
 All nonsense thus, of old or modern date,  
 Shall in thee centre, from thee circulate.  
 For this our Queen unfolds to vision true  
 Thy mental eye, for thou hast much to view:  
 Old scenes of glory, times long cast behind  
 Shall, first recall'd, rush forward to thy mind:  
 Then stretch thy sight o'er all her rising reign,  
 And let the past and future fire thy brain.

'Ascend this hill, whose cloudy point commands  
 Her boundless empire over seas and lands.  
 See, round the Poles where keener spangles shine,  
 Where spices smoke beneath the burning Line,  
 (Earth's wide extremes) her sable flag display'd,  
 And all the nations cover'd in her shade.

'Far eastward cast thine eye, from whence the Sun  
 And orient Science their bright course begun:  
 One god-like Monarch<sup>1</sup> all that pride confounds,  
 He, whose long wall the wand'ring Tartar bounds;

<sup>1</sup>The Emperor of China who built the Great Wall of China, and ordered a universal destruction of books.



Heav'ns! what a pile! whole ages perish there,  
 And one bright blaze turns Learning into air.

'Thence to the south extend thy gladden'd eyes;  
 There rival flames with equal glory rise,  
 From shelves to shelves see greedy Vulcan roll,  
 And lick up all the Physic of the Soul.  
 How little, mark! that portion of the ball,  
 Where, faint at best, the beams of Science fall:  
 Soon as they dawn, from Hyperborean skies  
 Embod'y'd dark, what clouds of Vandals rise!  
 Lo! where Mæotis sleeps, and hardly flows  
 The freezing Tanais thro' a waste of snows,<sup>1</sup>  
 The North by myriads pours her mighty sons,  
 Great nurse of Goths, of Alans, and of Huns!  
 See Alaric's stern port! the martial frame  
 Of Genseric! and Attila's dread name!  
 See the bold Ostrogoths on Latium fall;  
 See the fierce Visigoths on Spain and Gaul!  
 See, where the morning gilds the palmy shore  
 (The soil that arts and infant letters bore)  
 His conqu'ring tribes th' Arabian prophet draws,  
 And saving Ignorance enthrones by Laws.  
 See Christians, Jews, one heavy sabbath keep,  
 And all the western world believe and sleep.

'Lo! Rome herself, proud mistress now no more  
 Of arts, but thund'ring against heathen lore;  
 Her grey-hair'd Synods damning books unread,  
 And Bacon trembling for his brazen head.  
 Padua, with sighs, beholds her Livy burn,  
 And ev'n th' Antipodes Virgilius mourn.  
 See the Cirque falls, th' unpillar'd Temple nods,

<sup>1</sup>'I have been told that this was the couplet by which Pope declared his own ear to be most gratified: but the reason of this preference I cannot discover.' *Samuel Johnson*.

Streets pav'd with Heroes, Tiber chok'd with Gods:  
'Till Peter's keys some christ'ned Jove adorn,  
And Pan to Moses lends his pagan horn;  
See, graceless Venus to a Virgin turn'd,  
Or Phidias broken, and Apelles burn'd.

'Behold yon' Isle, by Palmers, Pilgrims trod,  
Men bearded, bald, cowl'd, uncowl'd, shod, unshod,  
Peel'd, patch'd, and pyebald, linsey-wolsey brothers,  
Grave Mummers! sleeveless some, and shirtless others.  
That once was Britain—Happy! had she seen  
No fiercer sons, had Easter never been.<sup>1</sup>  
In peace, great Goddess, ever be ador'd;  
How keen the war, if Dulness draw the sword!  
Thus visit not thy own! on this blest age  
Oh spread thy Influence, but restrain thy Rage!

'And see, my son! the hour is on its way,  
That lifts our Goddess to imperial sway:  
This fav'rite Isle, long sever'd from her reign,  
Dove-like, she gathers to her wings again.  
Now look thro' Fate! behold the scene she draws!  
What aids, what armies to assert her cause!  
See all her progeny, illustrious sight!  
Behold, and count them, as they rise to light.  
As Berecynthia, while her offspring vie  
In homage to the mother of the sky,  
Surveys around her, in the blest abode,  
An hundred sons, and ev'ry son a God:  
Not with less glory mighty Dulness crown'd  
Shall take thro' Grubstreet her triumphant round;  
And her Parnassus glancing o'er at once,  
Behold an hundred sons, and each a Dunce. . . .

<sup>1</sup>Pope refers to savage controversies 'about the right time of celebrating Easter'.

## BOOK IV

*Dulness Enthroned*

YET, yet a moment, one dim Ray of Light  
 Indulge, dread Chaos, and eternal Night!  
 Of darkness visible so much be lent,  
 As half to shew, half veil, the deep Intent.  
 Ye Pow'rs! whose Mysteries restor'd I sing,  
 To whom Time bears me on his rapid wing,  
 Suspend a while your Force inertly strong,  
 Then take at once the Poet and the Song.

Now flam'd the Dog-star's unpropitious ray,  
 Smote ev'ry Brain, and wither'd ev'ry Bay;  
 Sick was the Sun, the Owl forsook his bow'r,  
 The moon-struck Prophet felt the madding hour:  
 Then rose the Seed of Chaos, and of Night,  
 To blot out Order, and extinguish Light,  
 Of dull and venal a new World to mould,  
 And bring Saturnian days of Lead and Gold.

She mounts the Throne: her head a Cloud  
 conceal'd,  
 In broad Effulgence all below reveal'd;  
 ('Tis thus aspiring Dulness ever shines)  
 Soft on her lap her Laureate son reclines.

Beneath her footstool, *Science* groans in Chains,  
 And *Wit* dreads Exile, Penalties, and Pains.  
 There foam'd rebellious *Logic*, gagg'd and bound,  
 There, stript, fair *Rhet'ric* languish'd on the ground;  
 His blunted Arms by *Sophistry* are born,  
 And shameless *Billingsgate* her Robes adorn.  
*Morality*, by her false Guardians drawn,  
*Chicane* in Furs, and *Casuistry* in Lawn,  
 Gasps, as they straiten at each end the cord,

And dies, when Dulness gives her Page<sup>1</sup> the word.  
 Mad *Máthesis* alone was unconfi'd,  
 Too mad for mere material chains to bind,  
 Now to pure Space lifts her ecstatic stare,  
 Now running round the Circle finds it square.  
 But held in ten-fold bonds the *Muses* lie,  
 Watch'd both by Envy's and by Flatt'ry's eye:  
 There to her heart sad Tragedy address  
 The dagger wont to pierce the Tyrant's breast;  
 But sober History restrain'd her rage,  
 And promis'd Vengeance on a barb'rous age.  
 There sunk Thalia, nerveless, cold, and dead,  
 Had not her Sister Satire held her head:  
 Nor could'st thou, CHESTERFIELD! a tear refuse,  
 Thou wept'st, and with thee wept each gentle Muse.

When lo! a Harlot form<sup>2</sup> soft sliding by,  
 With mincing step, small voice, and languid eye:  
 Foreign her air, her robe's discordant pride  
 In patch-work flutt'ring, and her head aside:  
 By singing Peers up-held on either hand,  
 She tripp'd and laugh'd, too pretty much to stand;  
 Cast on the prostrate Nine a scornful look,  
 Then thus in quaint Recitativo spoke.

'O *Cara! Cara!* silence all that train:  
 Joy to great Chaos! let Division reign:  
 Chromatic tortures soon shall drive them hence,  
 Break all their nerves, and fritter all their sense:  
 One Trill shall harmonize joy, grief, and rage,  
 Wake the dull Church, and lull the ranting Stage;  
 To the same notes thy sons shall hum, or snore,

<sup>1</sup>Pope refers to a notorious hanging-judge of this name.

<sup>2</sup>Italian opera. The conflict between the supporters of Italian opera (patronized by Frederick, Prince of Wales) and those of Handel (including George II and Queen Caroline) rapidly assumed a political complexion.

And all thy yawning daughters cry, *encore*.  
 Another Phœbus, thy own Phœbus, reigns,  
 Joys in my jigs, and dances in my chains.  
 But soon, ah soon, Rebellion will commence,  
 If Music meanly borrows aid from Sense.  
 Strong in new Arms, lo! Giant HANDEL stands,  
 Like bold Briareus, with a hundred hands;  
 To stir, to rouse, to shake the soul he comes,  
 And Jove's own Thunders follow Mars's Drums.  
 Arrest him, Empress; or you sleep no more—<sup>1</sup>  
 She heard, and drove him to th' Hibernian shore.

And now had Fame's posterior Trumpet blown,  
 And all the Nations summon'd to the Throne.  
 The young, the old, who feel her inward sway,  
 One instinct seizes, and transports away.  
 None need a guide, by sure attraction led,  
 And strong impulsive gravity of Head;  
 None want a place, for all their Centre found,  
 Hung to the Goddess, and coher'd around.  
 Not closer, orb in orb, conglob'd are seen  
 The buzzing Bees about their dusky Queen.

The gath'ring number, as it moves along,  
 Involves a vast involuntary throng,  
 Who gently drawn, and struggling less and less,  
 Roll in her Vortex, and her pow'r confess.  
 Not those alone who passive own her laws,  
 But who, weak rebels, more advance her cause.  
 Whate'er of dunce in College or in Town  
 Sneers at another, in toupee<sup>1</sup> or gown;  
 Whate'er of mongrel no one class admits,  
 A wit with dunces, and a dunce with wits. . . .

<sup>1</sup>The curl which crowned the wig

*Dunces à la Mode*

IN flow'd at once a gay embroider'd race,  
And titt'ring push'd the Pedants off the place:  
Some would have spoken, but the voice was drown'd  
By the French horn, or by the op'ning hound.  
The first came forwards, with as easy mien,  
As if he saw St. James's and the Queen.  
When thus th' attendant Orator begun,  
'Receive, great Empress! thy accomplish'd Son:  
Thine from the birth, and sacred from the rod,  
A dauntless infant! never scar'd with God.  
The Sire saw, one by one, his Virtues wake:  
The Mother begg'd the blessing of a Rake.  
Thou gav'st that Ripeness, which so soon began,  
And ceas'd so soon, he ne'er was Boy, nor Man,  
Thro' School and College, thy kind cloud o'ercast,  
Safe and unseen the young Æneas past:  
Thence bursting glorious, all at once let down,  
Stunn'd with his giddy Larum half the town.  
Intrepid then, o'er seas and lands he flew:  
Europe he saw, and Europe saw him too.  
There all thy gifts and graces we display,  
Thou, only thou, directing all our way!  
To where the Seine, obsequious as she runs,  
Pours at great Bourbon's feet her silken sons;  
Or Tiber, now no longer Roman, rolls,  
Vain of Italian Arts, Italian Souls:  
To happy Convents, bosom'd deep in vines,  
Where slumber Abbots, purple as their wines:  
To Isles of fragrance, lily-silver'd vales,  
Diffusing languor in the panting gales:  
To lands of singing, or of dancing slaves,  
Love-whisp'ring woods, and lute-resounding waves.

But chief her shrine where naked Venus keeps,  
And Cupids ride the Lion of the Deeps;  
Where, eas'd of Fleets, the Adriatic main  
Wafts the smooth Eunuch and enamour'd swain.  
Led by my hand, he saunter'd Europe round,  
And gather'd ev'ry Vice on Christian ground;  
Saw ev'ry Court, heard ev'ry King declare  
His royal Sense of Op'ras or the Fair;  
The Stews and Palace equally explor'd,  
Intrigu'd with glory, and with spirit whor'd;  
Try'd all *hors-d'œuvre*, all *liqueurs* defin'd,  
Judicious drank, and greatly-daring din'd;  
Dropt the dull lumber of the Latin store,  
Spoil'd his own language, and acquir'd no more;  
All Classic learning lost on Classic ground;  
And last turn'd *Air*, the Echo of a Sound!  
See now, half-cur'd, and perfectly well-bred,  
With nothing but a Solo in his head;  
As much Estate, and Principle, and Wit,  
As Jansen, Fleetwood, Cibber<sup>1</sup> shall think fit;  
Stol'n from a Duel, follow'd by a Nun,  
And, if a Borough choose him not, undone;  
See, to my country happy I restore  
This glorious Youth, and add one Venus more.  
Her too receive (for her my soul adores)  
So may the sons of sons of sons of whores,  
Prop thine, O Empress! like each neighbour Throne,  
And make a long Posterity thy own.'  
Pleas'd, she accepts the Hero, and the Dame  
Wraps in her Veil, and frees from sense of Shame. . . .

<sup>1</sup>Theatrical managers.

*Dilettanti Dunces*

THEN thick as Locusts black'ning all the ground,  
 A tribe, with weeds and shells fantastic crown'd,  
 Each with some wond'rous gift approach'd the Pow'r,  
 A Nest, a Toad, a Fungus, or a Flow'r.  
 But far the foremost, two, with earnest zeal,  
 And aspect ardent to the Throne appeal.

The first thus open'd: 'Hear thy suppliant's call,  
 Great Queen, and common Mother of us all!  
 Fair from its humble bed I rear'd this Flow'r,  
 Suckled, and cheer'd, with air, and sun, and show'r,  
 Soft on the paper ruff its leaves I spread,  
 Bright with the gilded button tipt its head;  
 Then thron'd in glass, and named it CAROLINE:  
 Each maid cry'd, Charming! and each youth, Divine!  
 Did Nature's pencil ever blend such rays,  
 Such vary'd light in one promiscuous blaze?  
 Now prostrate! dead! behold that Caroline:  
 No maid cries, Charming! and no youth, Divine!  
 And lo the wretch! whose vile, whose insect lust  
 Laid this gay daughter of the Spring in dust.  
 Oh punish him, or to the Elysian shades  
 Dismiss my soul, where no Carnation fades!  
 He ceas'd, and wept. With innocence of mien,  
 Th' Accus'd stood forth, and thus address'd the  
 Queen.

'Of all th' enamell'd race, whose silv'ry wing  
 Waves to the tepid Zephyrs of the spring,  
 Or swims along the fluid atmosphere,  
 Once brightest shin'd this child of Heat and Air.  
 I saw, and started from its vernal bow'r,  
 The rising game, and chas'd from flow'r to flow'r.  
 It fled, I follow'd; now in hope, now pain;



It stopt, I stopt; it mov'd, I mov'd again.  
 At last it fix'd, 'twas on what plant it pleas'd,  
 And where it fix'd, the beauteous bird I seiz'd:  
 Rose or Carnation was below my care;  
 I meddle, Goddess! only in my sphere.  
 I tell the naked fact without disguise,  
 And, to excuse it, need but shew the prize;  
 Whose spoils this paper offers to your eye,  
 Fair ev'n in death! this peerless *Butterfly*?

'My sons!' (she answer'd) 'both have done your  
 parts:

Live happy both, and long promote our arts!  
 But hear a Mother, when she recommends  
 To your fraternal care our sleeping friends.  
 The common Soul, of Heav'n's more frugal make,  
 Serves but to keep fools pert, and knaves awake:  
 A drowsy Watchman, that just gives a knock,  
 And breaks our rest, to tell us what's a-clock.  
 Yet by some object ev'ry brain is stirr'd;  
 The dull may waken to a humming-bird;  
 The most recluse, discreetly open'd, find  
 Congenial matter in the Cockle-kind;  
 The mind, in Metaphysics at a loss,  
 May wander in a wilderness of Moss;  
 The head that turns at super-lunar things,  
 Pois'd with a tail, may steer on Wilkins' wings<sup>1</sup>. . . .

### *The Triumph of Dulness*

O MUSE! relate (for you can tell alone,  
 Wits have short Memories, and Dunces none),  
 Relate, who first, who last resign'd to rest;

<sup>1</sup>Dr. John Wilkins, one of the founders of the Royal Society, was interested in the possibility of flying to the Moon.

Whose Heads she partly, whose completely, blest;  
 What Charms could Faction, what Ambition lull,  
 The Venal quiet, and entrance the Dull;  
 'Till drown'd was Sense, and Shame, and Right, and  
     Wrong—  
 O sing, and hush the Nations with thy Song!

\*

In vain, in vain—the all-composing Hour  
 Resistless falls: the Muse obeys the Pow'r.  
 She comes! she comes! the sable Throne behold  
 Of *Night* primæval and of *Chaos* old!  
 Before her, *Fancy*'s gilded clouds decay,  
 And all its varying Rain-bows die away.  
*Wit* shoots in vain its momentary fires,  
 The meteor drops, and in a flash expires.  
 As one by one, at dread *Medea*'s strain,  
 The sick'ning stars fade off th' ethereal plain;  
 As *Argus*' eyes by *Hermes*' wand opprest,  
 Clos'd one by one to everlasting rest;  
 Thus at her felt approach, and secret might,  
*Art* after *Art* goes out, and all is *Night*.  
 See skulking *Truth* to her old cavern fled,  
 Mountains of *Casuistry* heap'd o'er her head!  
*Philosophy*, that lean'd on *Heav'n* before,  
 Shrinks to her second cause, and is no more.  
*Physic* of *Metaphysic* begs defence,  
 And *Metaphysic* calls for aid on *Sense*!  
 See *Mystery* to *Mathematics* fly!  
 In vain! they gaze, turn giddy, rave, and die.  
*Religion* blushing veils her sacred fires,  
 And unawares *Morality* expires.  
 For *public* Flame, nor *private*, dares to shine;  
 Nor *human* Spark is left, nor Glimpse *divine*!

Lo! thy dread Empire, CHAOS! is restor'd;  
Light dies before thy uncreating word;  
Thy hand, great Anarch! lets the curtain fall,  
And universal Darkness buries All.

## MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

### EPISTLE TO MISS BLOUNT, WITH THE WORKS OF VOITURE<sup>1</sup>

IN these gay thoughts the Loves and Graces shine,  
And all the Writer lives in ev'ry line;  
His easy Art may happy Nature seem,  
Trifles themselves are elegant in him.  
Sure to charm all was his peculiar fate,  
Who without flatt'ry pleas'd the fair and great;  
Still with esteem no less convers'd than read;  
With wit well-natur'd, and with books well-bred:  
His heart, his mistress, and his friend did share,  
His time, the Muse, the witty, and the fair.  
Thus wisely careless, innocently gay,  
Cheerful he play'd the trifle, Life, away;  
Till fate scarce felt his gentle breath suppress,  
As smiling Infants sport themselves to rest.  
Ev'n rival Wits did Voiture's death deplore,  
And the gay mourn'd who never mourn'd before;  
The truest hearts for Voiture heav'd with sighs,  
Voiture was wept by all the brightest Eyes:  
The Smiles and Loves had died in Voiture's death,  
But that for ever in his lines they breathe.

Let the strict life of graver mortals be  
A long, exact, and serious Comedy;  
In ev'ry scene some Moral let it teach,  
And, if it can, at once both please and preach.  
Let mine, an innocent gay farce appear,  
And more diverting still than regular,  
Have Humour, Wit, a native Ease and Grace,  
Tho' not too strictly bound to Time and Place:

<sup>1</sup>Vincent Voiture (1598-1648), a luminary of the Hotel Rambouillet.

Critics in Wit, or Life, are hard to please,  
Few write to those, and none can live to these.

Too much your Sex is by their forms confin'd,  
Severe to all, but most to Womankind;  
Custom, grown blind with Age, must be your guide;  
Your pleasure is a vice, but not your pride;  
By Nature yielding, stubborn but for fame;  
Made Slaves by honour, and made Fools by shame,  
Marriage may all those petty Tyrants chase,  
But sets up one, a greater, in their place;  
Well might you wish for change by those accurst,  
But the last Tyrant ever proves the worst.  
Still in constraint your suff'ring Sex remains,  
Or bound in formal, or in real chains:  
Whole years neglected, for some months ador'd,  
The fawning Servant turns a haughty Lord.  
Ah quit not the free innocence of life,  
For the dull glory of a virtuous Wife;  
Nor let false Shows, or empty Titles please:  
Aim not at Joy, but rest content with Ease.

The Gods, to curse Pamela with her pray'rs,  
Gave the gilt Coach and dappled Flanders Mares,  
The shining robes, rich jewels, beds of state,  
And, to complete her bliss, a Fool for Mate.  
She glares in Balls, front Boxes, and the Ring,  
A vain, unquiet, glitt'ring, wretched Thing!  
Pride, Pomp, and State but reach her outward part;  
She sighs, and is no Duchess at her heart.

But, Madam, if the fates withstand, and you  
Are destin'd Hymen's willing Victim too;  
Trust not too much your now resistless charms,  
Those, Age or Sickness, soon or late disarms:  
Good humour only teaches charms to last,  
Still makes new conquests, and maintains the past;

Love, rais'd on Beauty, will like that decay,  
 Our hearts may bear its slender chain a day;  
 As flow'ry bands in wantonness are worn,  
 A morning's pleasure, and at evening torn;  
 This binds in ties more easy, yet more strong,  
 The willing heart, and only holds it long.

Thus Voiture's early care still shone the same,  
 And Montausier<sup>1</sup> was only chang'd in name:  
 By this, ev'n now they live, ev'n now they charm,  
 Their Wit still sparkling, and their flames still warm.

Now crown'd with Myrtle, on th' Elysian coast,  
 Amid those Lovers, joys his gentle Ghost:  
 Pleas'd, while with smiles his happy lines you view,  
 And finds a fairer Ramboüillet in you.  
 The brightest eyes of France inspir'd his Muse;  
 The brightest eyes of Britain now peruse;  
 And dead, as living, 'tis our Author's pride  
 Still to charm those who charm the world beside.

EPISTLE TO THE SAME, ON HER LEAVING THE  
 TOWN AFTER THE CORONATION

As some fond Virgin, whom her mother's care  
 Drags from the Town to wholesome Country air,  
 Just when she learns to roll a melting eye,  
 And hear a spark, yet think no danger nigh;  
 From the dear man unwilling she must sever,  
 Yet takes one kiss before she parts for ever:  
 Thus from the world fair Zephalinda flew,  
 Saw others happy, and with sighs withdrew;  
 Not that their Pleasures caus'd her discontent,  
 She sigh'd not that they stay'd, but that she went.

She went, to plain-work, and to purling brooks,

<sup>1</sup>The Duc de Montausier married Mlle de Rambouillet.

Old fashion'd halls, dull Aunts, and croaking rooks:  
 She went from Op'ra, Park, Assembly, Play,  
 To morning-walks, and pray'rs three hours a day;  
 To part her time 'twixt reading and bohea;  
 To muse, and spill her solitary tea;  
 Or o'er cold coffee trifle with the spoon,  
 Count the slow clock, and dine exact at noon;  
 Divert her eyes with pictures in the fire,  
 Hum half a tune, tell stories to the squire;  
 Up to her godly garret after sev'n,  
 There starve and pray, for that's the way to heav'n.

Some Squire, perhaps you take delight to rack;  
 Whose game is Whisk, whose treat a toast in sack;  
 Who visits with a Gun, presents you birds,  
 Then gives a smacking buss, and cries,—'No words!'  
 Or with his hound comes hollowing from the stable,  
 Makes love with nods, and knees beneath a table;  
 Whose laughs are hearty, tho' his jests are coarse,  
 And loves you best of all things—but his horse.

In some fair ev'ning, on your elbow laid,  
 You dream of Triumphs in the rural shade;  
 In pensive thought recall the fancy'd scene,  
 See Coronations rise on ev'ry green;  
 Before you pass th' imaginary sights  
 Of Lords, and Earls, and Dukes, and garter'd Knights,  
 While the spread fan o'ershades your closing eyes;  
 Then give one flirt, and all the vision flies.  
 Thus vanish sceptres, coronets, and balls,  
 And leave you in lone woods, or empty walls!

So when your Slave, at some dear idle time,  
 (Not plagu'd with head-aches, or the want of rhyme)  
 Stands in the streets, abstracted from the crew,  
 And while he seems to study, thinks of you;  
 Just when his fancy points your sprightly eyes,

---

Or sees the blush of soft Parthenia rise,  
Gay pats my shoulder, and you vanish quite,  
Streets, Chairs, and Coxcombs, rush upon my sight;  
Vex'd to be still in town, I knit my brow,  
Look sour, and hum a Tune, as you may now.

EPITAPH  
ON MR. GAY

*In Westminster Abbey, 1732*

OF Manners gentle, of Affections mild;  
In Wit, a Man; Simplicity, a Child:  
With native Humour temp'ring virtuous Rage,  
Form'd to delight at once and lash the age:  
Above Temptation, in a low Estate,  
And uncorrupted, ev'n among the Great:  
A safe Companion, and an easy Friend,  
Unblam'd thro' Life, lamented in thy End.  
These are Thy Honours! not that here thy Bust  
Is mix'd with Heroes, or with Kings thy dust;  
But that the Worthy and the Good shall say,  
Striking their pensive bosoms—*Here* lies GAY.



THE CHALLENGE<sup>1</sup>

## A COURT BALLAD

To the Tune of 'To all you Ladies now at Land', etc [By Dorset]

## I

To one fair lady out of Court,  
 And two fair ladies in,  
 Who think the Turk and Pope a sport,  
 And wit and love no sin!  
 Come, these soft lines, with nothing stiff in,  
 To Bellenden, Lepell, and Griffin.  
 With a fa, la, la.

## II

What passes in the dark third row,  
 And what behind the scene,  
 Couches and crippled chairs I know,  
 And garrets hung with green;  
 I know the swing of sinful hack,  
 Where many damsels cry alack.  
 With a fa, la, la.

## III

Then why to Courts should I repair,  
 Where's such ado with Townshend?  
 To hear each mortal stamp and swear,  
 And every speech with 'Zounds' end;  
 To hear them rail at honest Sunderland,  
 And rashly blame the realm of Blunderland.  
 With a fa, la, la.

<sup>1</sup>Addressed to Pope's friends at the opposition court of the Prince and Princess of Wales. (afterwards George II and Queen Caroline), this elegant *jeu d'esprit* is full of references to the inmates of Leicester House, including Miss Bellenden and the beautiful Miss Lepel, the future Lady Hervey.

## IV

Alas! like Schutz I cannot pun,  
Like Grafton court the Germans;  
Tell Pickenbourg how slim she's grown,  
Like Meadows run to sermons;  
To court ambitious men may roam,  
But I and Marlbro' stay at home.  
With a fa, la, la.

## V

In truth, by what I can discern,  
Of courtiers, 'twixt you three,  
Some wit you have, and more may learn  
From Court, than Gay or Me:  
Perhaps, in time, you'll leave high diet,  
To sup with us on milk and quiet.  
With a fa, la, la.

## VI

At Leicester Fields, a house full high,  
With door all painted green,  
Where ribbons wave upon the tie,  
(A Milliner, I mean;)  
There may you meet us three to three,  
For Gay can well make two of Me.  
With a fa, la, la.

## VII

But should you catch the prudish itch,  
And each become a coward,  
Bring sometimes with you lady Rich,  
And sometimes mistress Howard;  
For virgins, to keep chaste, must go  
Abroad with such as are not so.  
With a fa, la, la.

## VIII

And thus, fair maids, my ballad ends;  
 God send the king safe landing;  
 And make all honest ladies friends  
 To armies that are standing;  
 Preserve the limits of those nations,  
 And take off ladies' limitations.  
 With a fa, la, la.

ANSWER TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTION  
 OF MRS. HOWE<sup>1</sup>

WHAT IS PRUDERY?

'Tis a Beldam,  
 Seen with Wit and Beauty seldom.  
 'Tis a fear that starts at shadows.  
 'Tis (no, 'tish't) like Miss *Meadows*.  
 'Tis a Virgin hard of Feature,  
 Old, and void of all good-nature;  
 Lean and fretful; would seem wise;  
 Yet plays the fool before she dies.  
 'Tis an ugly envious Shrew,  
 That rails at dear *Lepell* and You.

ON A CERTAIN LADY AT COURT<sup>2</sup>

I KNOW the thing that's most uncommon;  
 (Envy, be silent, and attend!)  
 I know a reasonable Woman,  
 Handsome and witty, yet a Friend.

<sup>1</sup>Mrs. Howe was Maid of Honour to the Princess of Wales; Miss Meadows, mentioned in the fourth line, a somewhat censorious and strait-laced colleague.

<sup>2</sup>Mrs. Howard, later Lady Suffolk, the mistress of George II. She suffered from deafness.

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Not warp'd by Passion, aw'd by Rumour,  
Not grave thro' Pride, or gay through Folly,  
An equal Mixture of good Humour,  
And sensible soft Melancholy.

'Has she no faults then (Envy says), Sir?'  
Yes, she has one, I must aver;  
When all the World conspires to praise her,  
The Woman's deaf, and does not hear.

## FAREWELL TO LONDON

IN THE YEAR 1715

DEAR, damn'd distracting town,  
farewell!  
Thy fools no more I'll tease:  
This year in peace, ye critics, dwell,  
Ye harlots, sleep at ease!

Soft B—— and rough C——s adieu,  
Earl Warwick make you moan,  
The lively H——k and you  
May knock up whores alone.

To drink and droll be Rowe allow'd  
Till the third watchman's toll;  
Let Jervas gratis paint, and Frowde  
Save three-pence and his soul.

Farewell, Arbuthnot's raillery  
On every learned sot;  
And Garth, the best good Christian he,  
Although he knows it not.

Lintot, farewell! thy bard must go;  
Farewell, unhappy Tonson!  
Heaven gives thee for thy loss of Rowe,<sup>1</sup>  
Lean Philips, and fat Johnson.

Why should I stay? Both parties rage;  
My vixen mistress squalls;  
The wits in envious feuds engage:  
And Homer (damn him<sup>1</sup>) calls.

The love of arts lies cold and dead  
In Halifax's urn.  
And not one Muse of all he fed  
Has yet the grace to mourn.

My friends, by turns, my friends confound,  
Betray, and are betrayed:  
Poor Y——r's sold for fifty pound,  
And B——ll is a jade.

Why make I friendships with the great,  
When I no favour seek?  
Or follow girls, seven hours in eight?  
I us'd but once a week.

Still idle, with a busy air,  
Deep whimsies to contrive;  
The gayest valetudinaire,  
Most thinking rake, alive.

Solicitous for others' ends,  
Though fond of dear repose;  
Careless or drowsy with my friends,  
And frolic with my foes.

<sup>1</sup>Poet Laureate on the accession of George I.

Luxurious lobster-nights, farewell,  
 For sober, studious days!  
 And Burlington's delicious meal,  
 For salads, tarts, and pease!

Adieu to all, but Gay alone,  
 Whose soul, sincere and free,  
 Loves all mankind, but flatters none,  
 And so may starve with me.

## EPIGRAM

ENGRAVED ON THE COLLAR OF A DOG WHICH I  
 GAVE TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS<sup>1</sup>

I AM his Highness' dog at Kew;  
 Pray tell me, sir, whose dog are you?

## TO MR. GAY

WHO HAD CONGRATULATED MR. POPE ON FINISHING  
 HIS HOUSE AND GARDENS

AH, friend! 'tis true—this truth you lovers know—  
 In vain my structures rise, my gardens grow;  
 In vain fair Thames reflects the double scenes  
 Of hanging mountains, and of sloping greens:  
 Joy lives not here,—to happier seats it flies,  
 And only dwells where WORTLEY casts her eyes.  
 What are the gay parterre, the chequer'd shade,  
 The morning bower, the ev'ning colonnade,  
 But soft recesses of uneasy minds,  
 To sigh unheard in, to the passing winds?

<sup>1</sup>Frederick, Prince of Wales.

So the struck deer in some sequester'd part  
Lies down to die, the arrow at his heart;  
He, stretch'd unseen in coverts hid from day,  
Bleeds drop by drop, and pants his life away.

UPON THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH'S  
HOUSE AT WOODSTOCK

'Atria longa patent; sed nec cenantibus usquam,  
Nec somno, locus est: quam bene non habitas.'

MARTIAL, *Epigr.* [XII, 50, vv. 7, 8]

SEE, sir, here's the grand approach;  
This way is for his Grace's coach.  
There lies the bridge, and here's the clock,  
Observe the lion and the cock,  
The spacious court, the colonnade,  
And mark how wide the hall is made!  
The chimneys are so well design'd,  
They never smoke in any wind.  
This gallery's contrived for walking,  
The windows to retire and talk in;  
The council chamber for debate,  
And all the rest are rooms of state.

Thanks, sir, cried I, 'tis very fine,  
But where d'ye sleep, or where d'ye dine?  
I find, by all you have been telling,  
That 'tis a house, but not a dwelling.

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OCCASIONED BY READING THE TRAVELS  
OF CAPTAIN LEMUEL GULLIVER

## I

TO QUINBUS FLESTRIN, THE MAN-MOUNTAIN

*An Ode by Tilly-Tit, Poet Laureate to His Majesty of Lilliput  
Translated into English*

IN amaze,  
Lost I gaze,  
Can our eyes  
Reach thy size?  
May my lays  
Swell with praise,  
Worthy thee!  
Worthy me!  
Muse, inspire,  
All thy fire!  
Bards of old  
Of him told,  
When they said  
Atlas' head  
Propp'd the skies:  
See! and believe your eyes!  
    See him stride  
Valleys wide,  
Over woods,  
Over floods!  
When he treads,  
Mountains' heads  
Groan and shake:  
Armies quake:  
Lest his spurn  
Overturn



Man and steed·  
 Troops, take heed!  
 Left and right,  
 Speed your flight!  
 Lest an host  
 Beneath his foot be lost.  
     Turn'd aside,  
     From his hide,  
     Safe from wound,  
     Darts rebound.  
     From his nose  
     Clouds he blows:  
     When he speaks,  
     Thunder breaks!  
     When he eats,  
     Famine threats!  
     When he drinks,  
     Neptune shrinks!  
     Nigh thy ear,  
     In mid air,  
     On thy hand  
     Let me stand;  
     So shall I,  
 Lofty Poet, touch the sky.

## II

THE LAMENTATION OF GLUMDALCLITCH FOR  
THE LOSS OF GRILDRIG

## A PASTORAL

SOON as *Glumdalclitch* miss'd her pleasing care,  
 She wept, she blubber'd, and she tore her hair.  
 No *British* miss sincerer grief has known,  
 Her squirrel missing, or her sparrow flown.

She furl'd her sampler, and haul'd in her thread,  
 And stuck her needle into *Grildrig's* bed;  
 Then spread her hands, and with a bounce let fall  
 Her baby, like the giant in *Guildhall*.  
 In peals of thunder now she roars, and now  
 She gently whimpers like a lowing cow:  
 Yet lovely in her sorrow still appears,  
 Her locks dishevell'd, and her flood of tears  
 Seem like the lofty barn of some rich swain,  
 When from the thatch drips fast a shower of rain.

In vain she search'd each cranny of the house,  
 Each gaping chink impervious to a mouse.  
 'Was it for this' (she cry'd) 'with daily care  
 Within thy reach I set the vinegar!  
 And fill'd the cruet with the acid tide,  
 While pepper-water worms thy bait supply'd;  
 Where twined the silver eel around thy hook,  
 And all the little monsters of the brook.  
 Sure in that lake he dropp'd; my *Grilly's* drown'd.'  
 She dragg'd the cruet, but no *Grildrig* found.

'Vain is thy courage, *Grilly*, vain thy boast;  
 But little creatures enterprise the most.  
 Trembling, I've seen thee dare the kitten's paw,  
 Nay, mix with children, as they play'd at taw,  
 Nor fear the marbles, as they bounding flew;  
 Marbles to them, but rolling rocks to you.

'Why did I trust thee with that giddy youth?  
 Who from a *Page* can ever learn the truth?  
 Versed in Court tricks, that money-loving boy  
 To some Lord's daughter sold the living toy;  
 Or rent him limb from limb in cruel play,  
 As children tear the wings of flies away.  
 From place to place o'er *Brobdingnag* I'll roam,  
 And never will return or bring thee home.

But who hath eyes to trace the passing wind?  
How, then, thy fairy footsteps can I find?  
Dost thou bewilder'd wander all alone,  
In the green thicket of a mossy stone;  
Or tumbled from the toadstool's slippery round,  
Perhaps all maim'd, lie grov'ling on the ground?  
Dost thou, embosom'd in the lovely rose,  
Or sunk within the peach's down, repose?  
Within the king-cup if thy limbs are spread,  
Or in the golden cowslip's velvet head:  
O show me, *Flora*, midst those sweets, the flower  
Where sleeps my *Grildrig* in his fragrant bower.  
    'But ah! I fear thy little fancy roves  
On little females, and on little loves;  
Thy pygmy children, and thy tiny spouse,  
Thy baby playthings that adorn thy house,  
Doors, windows, chimneys, and the spacious rooms,  
Equal in size to cells of honeycombs.  
Hast thou for these now ventured from the shore,  
Thy bark a bean-shell, and a straw thy oar?  
Or in thy box, now bounding on the main,  
Shall I ne'er bear thyself and house again?  
And shall I set thee on my hand no more,  
To see thee leap the lines, and traverse o'er  
My spacious palm? Of stature scarce a span,  
Mimic the actions of a real man?  
No more behold thee turn my watch's key,  
As seamen at a capstern anchors weigh?  
How wert thou wont to walk with cautious tread,  
A dish of tea like milk-pail on thy head?  
How chase the mite that bore thy cheese away,  
And keep the rolling maggot at a bay?'  
    She said, but broken accents stopp'd her voice,  
Soft as the speaking-trumpet's mellow noise:

She sobb'd a storm, and wip'd her flowing eyes,  
Which seem'd *like* two broad suns in misty skies.  
O squander not thy grief; those tears command  
To weep upon our cod in *Newfoundland*:  
The plenteous pickle shall preserve the fish,  
And *Europe* taste thy sorrows in a dish.

## VERSES LEFT BY MR. POPE

ON HIS LYING IN THE SAME BED WHICH WILMOT,  
THE CELEBRATED EARL OF ROCHESTER,  
SLEPT IN AT ADDERBURY,  
THEN BELONGING TO THE DUKE OF ARGYLE,  
JULY 9TH, 1739

WITH no poetic ardour fir'd  
I press the bed where Wilmot lay;  
That here he lov'd, or here expir'd,  
Begets no numbers grave or gay.

Beneath thy roof, Argyle, are bred  
Such thoughts as prompt the brave to lie  
Stretch'd out in honour's nobler bed,  
Beneath a nobler roof—thy sky.

Such flames as high in patriots burn,  
Yet stoop to bless a child or wife;  
And such as wicked kings may mourn,  
When freedom is more dear than life.